

A Your Life Matters Resource



**A 40-Day Prayer Guide
for Revival and Spiritual
Awakening**

Don Pucik, Editor

Introduction by
Ron Owens

Foreword by
Avery T. Willis, Jr.

ARKANSAS BAPTIST STATE CONVENTION

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I want to thank you for taking up the challenge to pray 40 days for revival in Arkansas. May your personal prayer time be filled with a sense of awe, wonder and joy.

Come, Lord Jesus – come!

Don Pucik
Arkansas Baptist State Convention

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Introduction

It is a heart-searching truth that the union between God and His people is so close, and that their partnership in the work of saving the world so real, that their performance of their part is as indispensable as God's, ...therefore a revived Church is the only hope for a dying world.

– Andrew Murray in *The Coming Revival*

Revival is Always Preceded by Prayer

Although revival is a sovereign work of God, we know that every revival in history has been preceded by extraordinary praying: persistent prayer of the kind we see in Hannah.

Longing for a son and desperate over the barrenness of her womb, Hannah would not give up appealing to God for a child. In response to Hannah's persistence, she did get her son -- and God got a prophet!

A sovereign God, who could work independently of us, chooses to include us in what He does.

Prayer is Partnering with God

When we think of the reviving of the church, where does our part begin? In Ezekiel 9, God marks the foreheads of those who are grieving over the condition of God's people. This mark was a sign of identification with the heart concerns of God Himself.

Are we ready to carry that identification? Will the burden of our hearts identify us as those who will stand in the gap, to pay the price of intercession?

Revival Praying is Asking God to Do What He Wants to Do

When we pray for revival and are ready to meet God's conditions, we will find ourselves praying back to God *that which is on His heart*. Does this not give us hope that God will hear, that He will visit us again in revival blessing?

Introduction - continued

*When the glory of the Father is the goal of every prayer;
When before the throne of heaven our High Priest presents it there;
When the Spirit prompts the asking and the pleading heart believes,
Then, yes then, we know for certain, he who's asking will receive.*

God grant that, here in Arkansas, many will step forward to be identified with what is on God's heart; ready to be marked as one of His intercessors.

Ron Owens

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Foreword

When terrorists attacked the World Trade Center and the Pentagon on 9/11/2001, I believe God sent us a wake-up call: He showed us the consequences of our not obeying the Great Commission to take the gospel to all peoples.

We have refused to send enough missionaries, so now we are sending thousands of troops. We have failed to send our gifts to missions, so now we will be paying billions more in taxes.

As we seek God for revival in Arkansas, here is what I hear God saying to His church:

Churches and Christians of America, I love you. I created you for Myself out of nothing. I made you to be a light to the nations. I established you to be a beacon to the hopeless, to give freedom to the prisoners, to lift up the oppressed.

I created you, not from one people but from many peoples, so you could bring the peoples of the world to saving faith in my Son, Jesus Christ. You were not a people and I made you a leader of nations so you could take my gospel to the peoples of the world.

I died on the cross in your place. I have redeemed you. I reconciled you from the enemy. I gave you the power of My resurrection. I sent you as ambassadors of reconciliation to those who sit in darkness and death.

I have seen your good works. You established the United States of America based on my precepts. You opened your arms to the peoples of the world. You proclaimed my Name. You have gone to the nations. Your influence is felt all over the world.

But I have some things against you: Your heart has turned you away from me. My plumb line shows you are not straight with Me.

- *You have loved yourself more than Me.*
- *You have proclaimed your name more than Mine.*
- *You have flaunted your rugged independence more than you have depended on Me.*

Foreword - continued

- *You have praised the cross instead of bearing it.*
- *You have been more religious than righteous.*
- *You have been more hedonistic than holy.*
- *You have been more political than prayerful.*
- *You have been more economic than ethical.*
- *You have been more accommodating than evangelistic.*
- *You have been more materialistic than missionary.*
- *You have used on yourselves the resources that I gave you to use to bless the world.*
- *You have prostituted my purpose for creating you as My people.*

I am awakening people to eternal things. Don't you see it? Come to my altar and be set on fire. I can use you only if you repent and are cleansed.

So now, I want to send revival to America so you can join me all over the world as laborers in my harvest fields. To take the light to the one-third of the world's people who have never heard of my Son, who have never seen a church and who do not know a Christian.

Behold, I stand at the door of your heart, your church and your home, knocking. If you will open the door, I will come in again and fellowship with you, then take you with Me to the peoples of the world. If you RETURN TO ME and are revived, you will be used as a light to the nations. Whoever has ears, let him listen. Whoever has my heart for the nations, pray to Me. Whoever has a tongue, proclaim my salvation to those for whom I died. Come to the cross, lay down your life, die that you may be sanctified, be crucified that you may be multiplied, and live that My Name be glorified by every tongue, tribe, people and nation.

Avery T. Willis, Jr.
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Day 1

Raise the Battle Cry

*...and he came to the trench, as the host was going forth to the fight,
and shouted for the battle*

1 Samuel 17:20 (KJV)

God is calling us to a very real battle over the next 40 days.

The story of David and Goliath in 1 Samuel 17 is one of the most familiar in the Bible. For forty days, the enemy presented himself day and night; we too will face an enemy for forty days. Every day we will see and feel the effects of the enemy as we seek God.

During this time of asking God for revival, the battle lines have been drawn. God's people are taking their stand. God is calling His people to battle for the cause of Christ.

God assured David that He would deliver a victory (1 Samuel 17:37). Like David, we do not battle the enemy alone. God is with us and goes before us preparing the way. God prepared David with a sling and a handful of stones, and He will surely prepare us. God always equips those He calls.

Our greatest defense in this battle is our battle cry. It is not the size of the church, it is not the ability of the people, but it is the battle cry of His people. The battle is not ours. The battle is God's (1 Samuel 17:47).

Father, as I enter into the great battle for the church and for lost souls, I acknowledge that the battle is yours. Hear my battle cry!

Tom Doty

Day 2

Long for the Presence of God

In the early 90's, I worked for an environmental engineering firm in south Louisiana. Occasionally, I would go into a chemical plant or refinery to draw water samples. In the lab, we analyzed the samples for the presence of various chemicals.

After a worship service, I often hear people say "God was here today." How can we know for certain? How can we "test" for the presence of God in our church fellowship?

Things happen. People change. God's presence accomplishes something in our lives. For example:

- **You will have a sense of awe (Revelation 1:17).** John fell on his face in the presence of God.
- **You will have a sense of His love (Ephesians 3:17-19).** His love is not only a fact; it is also experiential and defies verbal description.
- **You will have a crushing awareness of your own sinfulness (Isaiah 6:1-5).** Like raising the lights in a darkened room, God's holiness will highlight all the impurities in our lives.
- **You will have a deep desire to confess your sin and make things right with others (Luke 3:8-14).** Under John the Baptist's anointed message of repentance, the people, tax collectors and the soldiers all asked, "What shall we do then?"
- **You will begin to share His heart for a broken and lost world (Luke 9:36-38).** If His heart is moved with compassion, how can ours beat in any other way?

*Father, I want to know what it is to be
in Your presence on this side of heaven.*

Don Pucik

Day 3

Make Friends for Eternity

*Whenever God determines to do a great work, he first sets
His people to pray.*

– C.H. Spurgeon

Is God calling you do something great for Him?

In Rick Warren's *40 Days of Purpose* campaign, a question is asked, "What on earth am I here for?" The answer is simple: to love God and to love His people.

As we prepare for churchwide harvest events, like a high attendance day in Sunday School, we must realize that those who will walk through the doors of the church are more than a goal: they are *His people*, created in His image – the ones who bear the mark of creation.

It is true that sometimes those images maybe tarnished, dinged, and bent, but look closely into the eyes of your neighbors. Is it a friendly church that they need or is it friends?

Today is the day to see beyond whatever numerical goal the church may have and ask God for eyes that can see the *heart* of the matter: will we love the people He brings among us?

*Father, when you bring the crowds into our church, help me to see
individuals, not just numbers.*

Use me to win each person's heart by becoming a friend.

Sam Caery

Day 4

Pray Until He Comes

David Crowder wrote a unique worship song called *Make a Joyful Noise*. I especially love two lines in the song, “I will not be silent” and “I will not be quiet anymore.” They remind me of the prophet’s words in Isaiah 62:1:

For Zion's sake I will not keep silent, and for Jerusalem's sake I will not be quiet, until her righteousness goes forth as brightness, and her salvation as a burning torch.

Why will the prophet Isaiah not keep quiet? Because he longs to see the bright ray of righteousness and a flaming torch of salvation among his people. He is anticipating a great awakening among the Lord’s people. He is anticipating a massive movement of God’s Spirit. He is anticipating revival.

The “until” in Isaiah 62:1 is a picture of revival! Duncan Campbell captures the thought like this: “Revival is a community saturated with God.” This community earnestly desires to be *filled with all the fullness of God* (Ephesians 3:19) and is moved to sincerely pray for revival.

For Arkansas’ sake, I will not keep silent until a longing for revival births in my ministry and in my church. This is the noise I’m longing to hear: the noise of faithful prayer warriors; the powerful noise of the Spirit blowing wherever He pleases (John 3); the noise of salvation; the noise of many changed lives.

Father, unleash a movement of Your Spirit like we have never seen, heard or experienced before.

Mark Bridges

Day 5

Turn Towards Him

Does God really want a relationship with you?

Reading Isaiah 61:1, you may not think that is possible. God describes Himself as so powerful and immense, it is easy to feel insignificant!

But He continues in verse 2:

... but to this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at My Word.

Isaiah 66:2 (KJV)

God says that if anyone responds to Him His way, he will “look” toward them, show favor to them, or have regard for them! God is willing to turn toward us if we will turn to Him.

As you pray for personal revival, seek God for:

- **Humility** - Ask God to expose pride in your life. James 4:6 promises grace to the humble.
- **Brokenness** - Confessing his sin to God, David remembered that God does not “despise” broken and contrite hearts (Psalm 51:17)
- **Love for His Word** - God blesses those who obey His Word. Jesus said that if we love Him, we will demonstrate it through obedience. (John 14:15)

*Father, expose pride in my life. Show me what to confess.
As I search Your word for truth and guidance, teach me
and I will obey. Thank you for your regard for me.*

Bob Fielding

Day 6

Trust Him

"...From whence hath this man these things? and what wisdom is this which is given unto him, that even such mighty works are wrought by his hands? Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary, the brother of James, and Joses, and of Juda, and Simon? and are not his sisters here with us? And they were offended at him.

Mark 6:2-3 (KJV)

Jesus' ministry was in full swing. He had been actively ministering to the masses, and had even raised the dead, calmed a storm, and now He was coming to Nazareth, His hometown.

As Jesus taught, "many were amazed" (vs. 2).

But there was a negative reception – some even criticized Jesus and harshly rejected Him, His message, and His works. Those who should have known Him best actually knew Him least!

Unbelief has that affect on us.

Unbelief becomes a stifling barrier between us and the mighty things Jesus longs to do for us. The unbelief in Nazareth hindered Him from doing more miracles there. Jesus left, amazed at their lack of faith.

*Father, let me not be so familiar with who I think You are that I
miss who You really are.
Let me see Your mighty miracles and know Your living presence!*

Gail Pucik

Day 7

Seek His Insight into Your Troubles

A few days before I delivered our firstborn, my mother-in-law died unexpectedly. Her tragic death sent waves of shock and grief throughout our family.

To make matters worse, my father-in-law had just been released from the hospital following surgery. Within days, we felt obligated to abandon our apartment, nursery and all, and move into his home to help him recover. When my son was born, I found myself living in a strange house with a demanding new baby, not having a clue about how to care for him, my recuperating father-in-law, or my grieving husband.

I remember sitting in my mother-in-law's yellow leather rocker, crying as I tried to rock my son to sleep. I had never faced this type of crisis before, when everything seemed to be caving in on me at once. As I wrestled with my thoughts about my faith, I recalled a Scripture I had read:

*For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works,
which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.*

Ephesians 2:10 (KJV)

Suddenly, I understood what that passage meant for me. God brought this child into my life at this particular time for a reason. God was working out a great plan...for both of us.

*Father, there are many times when difficulties wedge their way
between my heart and your presence.
As You restore my soul, use me as a source of encouragement for
others.*

Karen Jordan

Day 8

He Will Do What He Wants To Do

I can do all things through Christ which strengthenth me.

Philippians 4:13 (KJV)

To say, "I can do all things" begs the question, "Like what?" Does that mean that any plan or scheme I devise will succeed? Definitely not! Someone once said, "Although Jesus is the author and finisher of our faith, He is under no obligation to finish what He did not author."

To boldly declare, *I can do all things through Christ* requires knowledge of what is to be done. Such an understanding comes only through the Word of God and through prayer.

Paul's ability to adjust to constantly changing circumstances, and yet still effectively minister, is a direct result of the sustaining power of Christ in his life. However, to serve as a conduit for the plan and purpose of God, we must know the plan and purpose we are to carry out.

Paul also admonishes us in 1 Thessalonians 5:17 to "Pray without ceasing." This maintenance of an attitude and atmosphere of the presence of God is the only way to consistently know His will in daily ministry. When we know our directed tasks, then we also know the outcome.

I can, because the Lord has said He will!

*Father, prayer doesn't change anything – You do!
Direct my heart to pray for Your will –
that You may be glorified in my life and in my church.*

Mark Thornbrugh

Day 9

Become Aware of the Lost

How can anyone develop a keen awareness for the lost? Here are three insights that have helped me:

The more I know Jesus, the better I understand who He is and what He desires. Passionately knowing Him is the beginning of seeing my world through His eyes, especially seeing those who are lost. Do you know Him? Do you sense His heart for the lost?

Studying His word gives a deeper understanding of the heart of God.

...The Lord God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, Keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, ...

Exodus 34:6-7 (KJV)

You will become more aware of the lost as you grow in your understanding of His heart. Memorize scriptures that describe the heart of God and think about them throughout the day.

Be intentionally obedient in witnessing.

You are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, to declare the praises of Him who has called you out of darkness in to His light. You are called to bear witness; it is the normal activity of a child of God.

*Father, give me a heart like yours for lost people.
As I grow in You and Your Word, open my eyes
and fill me with compassion for people who do not know You.*

Reed Dillahunty

Day 10

Battle Against Complacency

...Why sit we here until we die?

2 Kings 7:3 (KJV)

Four leprous, dying men were sitting at the gates of a dying city. They couldn't go into the city and were afraid to go out, because the enemy had surrounded them. If they stayed where they were and did nothing, they would surely die.

One question jolted them out of their complacency: *Why are we sitting here until we die?* The emphasis is upon the word "here."

The question made them realize they had to take action.

I believe there are questions we must ask if we want a better tomorrow and a hope of revival. Maybe a question like, "Would I be content to die in the place where I am now in my life?"

If your answer to the question is, "I am not ready to die," then why do we sit here until we die? Why do we sit in the status quo when things can be different? Why do we sit in depression, loneliness, strife and boredom?

This is a day to be bold and daring and a little bit crazy in your faith. We all have to risk breaking this stranglehold of status quo. So let the dream of revival be restored in your life and become the devil's worst nightmare.

Father, I want to combat mediocrity and complacency in my life.

I want my life to count in eternity.

Lead me to pray and live boldly on this side of heaven.

Bill Fitzhugh

Day 11

Lord, Begin with Me

Explaining why so few revivals were occurring in his day, Charles Finney wrote:

Now it does appear to me that we who are ministers, instead of looking abroad and searching for the fundamental difficulty beyond and out of ourselves, should see that whatever else may be an occasion of the great falling off and decline in revivals, our own spiritual state is certainly one, if not the primary and fundamental, reason of this decline.

I don't believe much has changed since Finney's day. At Union Valley Baptist Church where I pastor, we hold two revival services a year. In most meetings we see people saved. but, on a whole, the church is left much the same as it was before.

I have had the pleasure of being part of two revivals that I felt were true movements of God. A year after the meetings, we still saw God changing lives and saving souls.

Both of those meetings were preceded by a time when the membership looked inwardly at their lives through the eyes of God's word; much time was spent on our knees before Him in prayer. It was a time of deep, serious refection. In Lamentations 3:40 we read:

Let us search and try our ways, and turn again to the Lord.

If we want to know why we don't see revival, we don't have to look much further than our own doorstep.

Father, let revival begin with me!
Tommy Miller

Day 12

End the Fighting Now

... that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that Thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as Thou hast loved me.

John 17:23 (KJV)

I remember when the preacher said, "The greatest sin being committed on the face of the earth today is..."

I was all ears. What was it? Abortion? Pornography? Rape? Murder? His answer made me sick to my stomach.

He said it was fighting and bickering in the church.

I began to think of churches I had been a part of. Often there was disharmony.

Some little thing – while nothing compared to people all around the church going to hell – seemed to always be on the hearts of combatants in the church.

Jesus prays for us to be ones to tell the world that He has been sent by the Father to save the world. Fighting grieves the Holy Spirit, the One who draws people to Jesus.

The Lord doesn't draw people to selfish, fighting churches. He draws them to churches filled with the love of God, flowing out to people in every direction.

Father, fill my church with your love. Bring an end to the selfish bickering in our churches and denomination; lead us to become an oasis of love and care in a dark, hostile world.

Don Phillips

Day 13

Ask God to Use the Children

The harvest is plentiful...

Matthew 9:37

In 1987, singer Whitney Houston had a hit song which began, "I believe the children are the future..."

Many adult believers have adopted the same idea. Children are the future of the church in one sense, but they are also part of the church *today!*

Consider this: some of the greatest victories in the Bible have involved children who had great faith. God used them to do incredible things for the Kingdom. We must pray for the salvation of young children, not only because they are the future, but also because He wants to use them to begin building His Kingdom today.

I know of few mission fields more ripe for harvest than the school system. What an exciting thought: a child comes to know God and takes that newfound joy to the playground and shares with all his friends the story of salvation.

Imagine if there were three or four kids on that playground sharing their newfound salvation story; dream what it would be like for that to happen in every school system in the state. Let's pray for this!

*Father, may Your Spirit move in the hearts of children across
Arkansas as they share Christ with their friends.*

Bill Newton

Day 14

Press on through Difficulty

I am learning not to ask God, "Why?"

Over the years, God has helped me know Him during some difficult days. Some key insights:

- **Combat doubt with obedience.** Real peace comes from understanding the question instead of the answer. "Whys" come from the over-ripened fruit of doubt – and that fruit, that noxious tree, can only be made sweet by raw obedience to the Lord.
- **Happiness is not a place, but a way of life.** Replace *wanting* and *getting* with *living* – life is to be found in the journey. It is not about *arriving* or *having* – it is about *living*.
- **Seek God's presence every day.** Too often my worldview is tilted towards tomorrow – focused on the future instead of the daily gift of God's presence in my life.

Life, then, is to embrace and know our God in every experience!

He reveals all that He wants me to be, to enjoy, and to share with a doubting world – a world that poses impossible questions that can only be answered by a God of purpose.

*Father, when I am confused and disoriented,
what I need more than the answers to my questions
is an encounter with You.*

Dan Jordan

Day 15

Get to Know Him

The other day, I was behind a car that had some interesting bumper stickers. One said, "God, save us from your followers." The other was, "When religion ruled the world, they called it the dark ages." The man driving the car looked like a poster child for the devil.

They reminded me that there is a serious spiritual battle raging all around us – and we are in it.

Jesus said in John 15:5 (KJV),

... for without Me ye can do nothing.

That means any good done through our lives is going to be done by Him – not us. Our job is to stay close to the Lord.

In John 17:3 (KJV), He says,

And this is life eternal, that they might know Thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom Thou hast sent.

That is the key. We need to be people who are intimately acquainted with God and all His ways. Average prayer and faith won't win most of our spiritual battles. One of the ways God spells LOVE is

T-I-M-E. God blesses and uses those who make time to know Him.

*Father, I want to be part of a generation
that truly falls in love with You –
You more than anyone or anything else in this world.*

Mike Shy

Day 16

Preparing Now for New Believers

A woman sought Elisha, the prophet whose reputation as a man of God was well known (2 Kings 4:1-7). She explained to the prophet how her husband had died and left her with a debt that had to be paid immediately.

Elisha instructed her to take her sons and go around their community to collect as many empty jars as they could find. Then Elisha directed them to go inside their house, shut the doors, and pour oil from one nearly empty jar of oil into all the completely empty jars.

As long as there were empty jars to fill, the oil continued to flow from the nearly empty jar.

The truth is that many of our churches are not prepared for a revival that would result in more people coming into the church. Why? We have not offered God any empty jars for Him to fill with new people!

It has been proven time and time again that new Bible study groups and classes reach new people. If a church is really serious about reaching new people, they need to offer God some new Sunday School classes – some empty “jars.” Maybe you are the one God is waiting on to be the catalyst to start a new class that will intentionally show people that their life matters to God!

Father, I want to empty anything out of my life that is a barrier to reaching new people. Use me to encourage or help start a new Bible study group in our church where new believers can learn that they matter to God.

Clay Hallmark

Day 17

Pray Until He Answers

Though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him: but I will maintain mine own ways before Him. He also shall be my salvation: for an hypocrite shall not come before Him.

Job 13:15-16 (KJV)

Job is one of many in the Scriptures who chose to strive with God in prayer. Jacob, Moses, Jeremiah, Amos, Paul and a host of others persisted in their relationships with the Lord, because they knew if anything was to change in their lives, it would come from the giver of all good gifts.

God's holiness and purposes do not change, but in light of the prayers of His people, God's actions can change. God is not deaf, He listens; and more than that, He acts.

A wise man once said, "never be satisfied with an unanswered prayer." God desires for us to seek Him continually, not just to get what we want, but to get our wants and His wants in line with one another.

Strive with God until an answer is given, negatively or positively: pray for the best God can give. Just as Jacob wrestled with the angel of God for a blessing, we must strive with God for answered prayer. We must never give up praying for revival to come to our churches and communities. We must never grow weary and lose heart in our passion for prayer.

Father, grant us the ability and desire to persist in our conversations with you as the prophets did. May our persistent heart cries for revival bring about change in our own lives and the lives of our churches.

Dave McClung

Day 18

Pray Hard, Live Hard

On August 2, 1745, David Brainerd penned the following words in his diary after 28 discouraging months of serving as an early colonial missionary to native Americans in New England:

I began to entertain serious thoughts of giving up my mission. I do not know that my hopes respecting the conversion of the Indians were ever reduced to so low an ebb. And yet this was the very season that God saw fittest to begin this glorious work! And thus He ordained strength out of weakness, by making bare His almighty arm at a time when all hopes and human probabilities most evidently appeared to fail.

On August 8, God broke through. Less than a year later, Brainerd had baptized 77 and led a congregation of 150.

The converts immediately abandoned animism, alcohol, and adultery. The change of life was permanent and dramatic.

In less than two years, Brainerd died – at age 29.

Are you losing hope that God could do a mighty work in your life or in your church? This might be the very time He is about to move! Don't quit now... keep praying until He shows Himself strong to you and your church.

*Father, You have a way of stepping in
when all human solutions and answers have failed.
Come into my life and my church and do a mighty work,
proving to everyone who sees that You are a God
who hears and acts on behalf of His people!*

Don Pucik

Day 19

Spend Time in Silence Before the Lord

Noise wears us; silence feeds.

– C.H. Spurgeon

Sometimes you are surrounded by too much noise. Noise can separate you from a wellspring of eternal joy, excitement, and purpose.

How can silence feed you? The deep recesses of your soul – the places where one seldom goes – need to be fed with silent inspection. It's in these places where the Word of God begins to speak to your life.

In silence...

- you are healed through the cross;
- you are transformed through the work of the Holy Spirit;
- your heart comes alive;
- you stand in awe of God; and
- you are moved by the very presence of God to share the glorious cross of Jesus Christ.

If not for the silence, you could not be heard.

*Father, I will spend time in silence before You,
allowing You to transform me into the image of Your Son.
Use our time alone together to change me into a real voice for you*

–
*someone who will joyfully offer the wonderful news of forgiveness
through Jesus Christ.*

Eric Roberts

Day 20

Where Would Jesus Go?

In April 1997, our family moved to San Antonio, Texas to start a church in an inner city apartment community. Because of the high rate of people moving in and out of the complex, every six months we had a lot of new people to meet.

We found one of the best ways to get to know people was to do a *First Touch Event*. This was an opportunity to meet new people, share with them what was going on in the community, explain who we were, and find out about their faith walk. We met some very interesting people along the way: drug dealers, gang bangers and prostitutes. Occasionally, we would encounter fellow Christians.

Now ask yourself: where was Jesus and what was He doing in most of the stories throughout the New Testament? He was hanging out with people in social settings – getting to know them and ministering to their needs (see John 2:1-11).

First Touch Events, social gatherings involving the community, are a great way for you and your church to put your hands, feet and faith together and connect with unchurched neighbors.

*Father, show us how to love people and win hearts
in social settings, just as Jesus did.*

Bill Howse

Day 21

Pray through Every Obstacle

Have you noticed that, the moment that you decide to spend time in prayer, everything that can go wrong goes wrong? In the midst of writing this, my son's car has been stolen and my father-in-law's house broken into. Why is it that dedication to spiritual renewal often brings with it worldly problems? How can we manage the obstacle course?

Preparation for revival begins by going to a place of prayer. It is at the place of prayer that God brings the desires of our hearts closer to His; it is also where we can experience the greatest obstacles.

In Acts 16:16-31, Paul and Silas were on their way to a place of prayer when a demon-possessed woman recognized them as men of God and began shouting, "These men will tell you the way to be saved!"

Paul and Silas cast out the demon in the girl – without her powers, her owners would lose money – and soon found themselves in prison.

We face obstacles every day. For Paul and Silas, the obstacles were prison chains. For us it might be limited income, managing a full time job and ministry, a busy family life or an illness.

Paul and Silas dealt with their obstacles by praying and praising God. God didn't remove Paul and Silas from prison, but He did remove the obstacles: the jailor came to know Christ, along with his entire household!

*Father, remove any obstacles that are preventing me
and my church from experiencing revival.*

Gayla Parker

Day 22

Relationships that Count in Eternity

I often encourage our church in building relationships with the lost. A lady from our church befriended a couple in her apartment complex and invited them to come to our annual fish fry. The husband, Steve, was confined to a wheelchair, due to a series of strokes. He gave several excuses why they couldn't come, but the young lady persisted.

Following the fish fry, we had a gospel music concert and I closed by presenting the plan of salvation. Both Steve and his wife responded. After receiving Christ, Steve looked up and, with tears streaming down his face, said, "I can die now!"

At first I didn't understand the depth of that statement. Only later did I discover that doctors had virtually given up on Steve's surviving more than a few months. I had the privilege of baptizing him and his wife. That day our people left stating, "We never saw anything like this!"

Like the paralyzed man in Mark 2:1-12, this couple's journey began when a neighbor took the time to care, began to cultivate a friendship with them and then brought them to hear about Jesus. Faith – believing Jesus could and would do something in the man's life – is all it took.

Father, there are so many people around me who need Jesus – I hardly know where to begin. Direct me in building relationships that will lead to their salvation.

Robbie Jackson

Day 23

Make an Impact with Your Heart

Spiritual awakening and revival begins in the heart of the praying individual.

The legacy of the first Great Awakening was significantly influenced by Jonathan Edwards, who said, "I will live for God. If no one else does, I still will."

A legacy of missions and evangelism began when Lottie Moon said, "I went to a campus revival to scoff, and returned to my room to pray all night."

A legacy of spiritual impact is being felt among today's collegiate generation through collegians who have a passion for making God known:

Amanda said, "Revival for me starts with my own praying. You don't have to have a lot of people to have revival."

Jessica shared, "Revival is when I pray and live for God and try to bring the rest of the world to the same point."

Scott declared, "When I got on the plane in Asia to go home from the mission trip, I realized I was being sent to America. It shouldn't be any different to be a missionary in Asia or a Christian in Arkansas."

Spiritual renewal and awakening come from the heart of God and begin here on earth through the heart of the praying individual. God has always used His people to bring revival. He still does.

*Father, our renewing God, make Yourself known
to others through my life.*

Diane Parker

Day 24

Ask Him to Penetrate Hearts

For our gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance; as ye know what manner of men we were among you for your sake.

1 Thessalonians 1:5

The Gospel penetrated the hearts that were ready to receive it in five ways:

1. by the Word of God;
2. by the power of God;
3. through the person of the Holy Spirit;
4. by deep conviction of sin and conviction of desperate need for God; and
5. by the power of a life lived for God.

We know it is the activity of God that draws lost souls to Himself. It is not us. But He gives us the privilege to ask and seek and knock, and to watch and pray for His divine appointments. How blessed we are to even have the privilege of saying, "Here am I Lord, send me!" (Isaiah 6:8)

God is drawing people to Himself. God wants to usher in days of refreshing for believers and spiritual awakening for those yet to believe in Him.

Thank you for believing the life of everyone really does matter to God.

Father, may Your loving Gospel permeate the lives of non-believers and struggling believers through your Word, Your power, the Holy Spirit, deep conviction, and the testimony of my life as I walk with you.

Teresa "Bit" Stephens

Day 25

Ask for a Compassionate Heart

Our world is filled with hurting people. Everywhere we look there are those whose hearts are broken and lives that are in turmoil. Many are going through storms and have nothing to hold onto as they are tossed by the winds blowing and waves crashing against them. Their problems may be in circumstances, health, family, job or marriage.

Sometimes these are problems of their own making, but they are problems and troubles nonetheless.

When Jesus looked over the multitudes, He saw people in every kind of condition. Yet, Jesus had a heart of compassion.

But when He saw the multitudes, He was moved with compassion on them, because they fainted, and were scattered abroad, as sheep having no shepherd.

Matthew 9:36 (KJV)

During this season of prayer for revival in Arkansas, ask God to give you a heart of compassion for every person with whom you come in contact.

Reach out to those who are lonely, sick or depressed. Minister to those in jails, prisons, hospitals or nursing homes. Give loving direction to those who don't seem to know right from wrong.

Above all, show Jesus to those who are lost. Let's love them as He has loved us. Don't be afraid to reach out and touch people with Jesus' love.

Lord, give me the heart of Jesus – a heart of real compassion.

James Ross

Day 26

Revive Our Families

Mount Magazine is the highest point in Arkansas, rising 2,753 feet above sea level. The gaze from the top on a clear day is breathtaking as one beholds the vast expanse of God's creation.

As the Old Testament concludes, the prophet Malachi gives us a glimpse of revival in the future. In Malachi 4:4, he urges us to gaze behind us and remember the law. Does the view from the peaks in Arkansas reveal that there is a famine for the Word in the home?

Malachi 4:5 encourages us to gaze ahead and recognize that a day of judgment is coming; but before that day, there is time, there is mercy and there is a messenger. *Your Life Matters* is a time for messengers of mercy to spread the gospel. Will you pray that God will raise up messengers of mercy to take the gospel outside the walls of the church and into people's homes?

The challenge to gaze inwardly at the home is a striking conclusion of the Old Testament. Malachi stresses the relationship between a father and his children.

The family is in peril and in desperate need for revival. Will you pray that God will renew the hearts of fathers towards their children and children towards their fathers and bring genuine revival in the home?

Father, I'm praying for the time when I can look across Arkansas and see genuine revival breaking out in families, churches, and communities.

Ben Phillips

Day 27

Welcome Everyone

Luis and Nelson were Hispanic teenagers that began bumming a ride to church from one of our church families. To say that God used a couple of Hispanic students to transform the face of a predominantly white, middle-class student ministry would be an understatement!

Luis and Nelson began sharing their faith with their friends in their low income apartment complex, and, before long, they were bringing in a couple of vans full of rough teenagers that had never stepped foot in a church.

What a joy it has been to see the majority of these mostly neglected and unloved students come to accept the saving grace of Jesus. Many have begun to invest their lives in different ministries of our church.

Although Luis' and Nelson's family recently moved to Philadelphia, we are able to look out over our ethnically diverse students every Sunday and Wednesday and see the many lives that they touched.

*Father, I pray that our church will have a burning desire
to accept those who are "unacceptable",
to love those who are unloved,
and to reach out to the unchurched.*

Daren Neely

Day 28

Renew Me So I Can Rescue Others

Satan has blinded the minds of the saints and kept them in ignorance of their birthright privileges and of their responsibility to live an overcoming life by the power of the Holy Spirit. It is he who seeks to hinder revival among the saints of God today.

– James A. Stewart

When I was a child in the 1950's and 1960's, we had two-week revival meetings in which we sought to win the lost.

But as time went on, we began to redefine the word “revival.” We knew that revival meant to “reawaken life” – to bring life back to those who were already Christians.

What we failed to realize was that we needed to pray, fast and seek God's will in our lives before the evangelist arrived. James A. Stewart once said, “*Revival is the saints of God agonizing on behalf of lost souls going to hell.*”

Revival begins when we confess our sins to God and then focus our attention on the lost in our community.

We must pray daily for lost souls, show them we care about them personally and share our testimony with those whose hearts are ready.

Bringing the lost to Christ is the true sign that revival has come to you and your church.

*Father, bring the renewal we need in our church –
change us on every level – so that our hearts will then beat
as one with Your heart...for souls.*

John Sammons

Day 29

Ask for His Time

These be the words which Moses spake unto all Israel on this side Jordan in the wilderness, ... (There are eleven days' journey from Horeb by the way of mount Seir unto Kadesh-barnea.) And it came to pass in the fortieth year, in the eleventh month, on the first day of the month, that Moses spake unto the children of Israel, ...

Deuteronomy 1:1-3 (KJV)

Deuteronomy opens at the end of 40 years of wilderness wanderings. In verse 2, Moses notes that a normal journey from Sinai to the Promised Land was only 11 days.

However, because of their obstinacy and rebellion, it took Israel 40 years to experience what God was willing to give them in just 11 days! I don't have that much time – do you?

We can talk about praying for revival. We can preach about it, write books about it, teach classes on it and even hold an occasional prayer service focusing on it.

I am suggesting the time line for revival may not be nearly as long as we think. We ought to pray and not give up – but we also ought to pray as if God was about to come soon. I mean really, really soon!

Ask God to help you boldly obey everything He asks you to do – unlike the generation of Israelites who lost their inheritance in the wilderness – so that you do not miss anything God wants to accomplish in your generation.

*Father, I see how an entire generation was lost
through disobedience and rebellion.
If you are ready to bring revival in 11 days,
I want to be ready to do whatever you ask me to do!*

Don Pucik

Day 30

Help New Believers Grow in Faith

And the angel of the Lord called unto him out of heaven, and said, Abraham, Abraham: and he said, Here am I.

Genesis 22:11 (KJV)

Os Guinness gives a very helpful definition of doubt in his book, *In Two Minds*. He says,

When you believe, you are in one mind and accept something as true. Unbelief is to be of one mind and reject that something is true. To doubt is to waver between the two, to believe and disbelieve at the same time, and so to be in 'two minds.'

When God called Abraham to sacrifice Isaac, Abraham answered Him twice with the words, "Here I am." He was willing to follow Him.

Abraham was in "one mind" and accepted God's word as true. Even though God had called him to sacrifice his beloved son, Abraham never wavered between belief and disbelief. Rather, Abraham knew that he had had an encounter with God, and he was going to be faithful in following the command of God.

Many people are going to have an encounter with God during *Your Life Matters* that will cause them to believe. Pray that they may be in "one mind" – unwavering in belief – as they grow in Christ and their understanding of the truth.

*Father, please protect and grow the new believers who come into our churches in coming months.
Grow our churches to become nurseries for new disciples –
places where their faith can grow strong!*

Clint Ritchie

Day 31

Meditate on His Sacrifice

Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things... But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot:

I Peter 1:18-19 (KJV)

The church has lost its awe of the blood of Christ – we should be deeply grieved. This loss of respect for the blood by which we are saved has cost us the fire of the Holy Spirit.

Hebrews 10:29 warns that the blood of Christ must never be treated with disrespect – it is precious because of the Son who willingly laid down His life.

What can we expect if we treat the sacrifice with respect?

Revival fires are born in the blood of Jesus.

A young mother in our congregation gives the testimony that, before conversion, she really did not understand Christians.

They seemed like such bloody people. They were always talking about the blood. I did not understand until I came to Christ why some Christians were so focused on the blood. I finally understand what the blood of Jesus has done for me.

“Oh, precious is the flow” describes the blood that flows with all the hopes and dreams of our Mighty God through His Son for His church – a church on fire.

*Father, deepen my understanding of the cross
and the incredible price paid to secure my salvation.*

Linda Thornbrugh

Day 32

Sit Before the Lord

In my office sits a blue chair. This is where patients sit to be interviewed prior to their appointments. They share their various ailments and stories. Some stories are humorous and some are sad – but we see them all.

What makes this blue chair so interesting?

It moves around – depending on who is seated in it. Some move it very close to me, as though we were great buddies. Others push it back until it is right up against the wall. I have even seen a few turn it slightly away from me, as if making eye contact would result in some mysterious calamity.

As I thought about the blue chair, I was reminded that many of us approach the Lord in odd and various ways. Some approach Him very timidly while others approach with boldness. Some of us just sit and wait to see what's next.

John 15:15 tells me that Jesus calls me His friend. I can come and sit quietly, I can come in confidence or I can come in repentance, not really wanting to make eye contact until He says all is forgiven.

How wonderful is the idea that there might be a blue chair where I can sit and talk with my Savior! No matter whether my time with Him is filled with laughter or with sadness, He still He sees me and takes care of me.

*Father, teach me how to sit before You.
I want to develop a sensitive ear to Your voice.
Teach me to live within earshot of Your voice.*

Linda Thornbrugh

Day 33

Do Church with No Limits

Recently, I was visiting with a friend, a farmer who was studying data retrieved from the recent harvest. He was able to compare the yield to the pH level of the soil and determine the performance of the various varieties of rice planted.

"The main question I want to ask at this point of the study phase is," he said, "did the variety meet its potential and, if not, what was the *limiting factor*?"

That's an interesting phrase – the *limiting factor*! Jesus identified a *limiting factor* to the growth of the Kingdom.

The harvest truly is plenteous, but the labourers are few;

Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that He will send forth labourers into His harvest.

Matthew 9:37-38 (KJV)

Asking questions to identify and address *limiting factors* is an essential step for the church that desires to join God on His mission. Questions such as:

- What can we do better to reach more people for God's Kingdom?
- What do we need to begin?
- What do we need to bury?
- What do I need to change?

When it comes to experiencing a harvest, are you willing to ask the tough question, "What is the *limiting factor*?"

*Father, we want to be ready for the harvest in our community.
Reveal to us our limiting factors. Grant us the faith
and courage to follow you in making changes
necessary for the harvest.*

Sam Roberts

Day 34

Depend on Him

...when they had prayed... Acts 4:31 (KJV)

What happens when we pray? What difference does it make when we come together for a collective time of intimate and glorious intercession with our Father “who art in heaven?” What do we desire when we come together to pray?

The early church in Acts 4 had a divine encounter when they prayed. The place where they had gathered together was shaken. They were filled with the Holy Spirit and they began to speak the Word of God with confidence – what they had prayed for earlier in the chapter.

It is not strange that we receive what we pray for.

When will we utterly, exclusively and powerlessly trust Him and Him alone for direction, power, and results that expose the awesome God of the universe?

Our actions reveal the depth of our prayers. So let us approach prayer with caution, sincerity and a deep desire to worship and honor the living God. How? Pray with complete dependence on Him to respond to the desperation of His children crying out before Him. Let's pray!

*Father, would you shake the place when my church
prays together and seeks You? I want to see
Your mighty hand at work all around!*

David James

Day 35

Expect Answers from Your Father

On a pond bank in the woods, I found myself at a loss for words. The prayer time had been especially sweet and personal, but I realized I was out of prayer topics. Unwilling for the fellowship to end, I admitted to the Lord that I had nothing left to say. In my heart I immediately knew that He was telling me, "It's okay, son, I'm just glad you came."

Nothing is more humbling than answered prayer. To consider that the God of the universe has heard us and answered our petition is the sweetest of life's pleasures. After all, who are we that God should take time for our concerns? Even when the answer is no, we somehow realize the perfection of His plan for our lives did not permit a different answer.

For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the Lord, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end.

Jeremiah 29:11 (KJV)

Father. That's the word we have the privilege to use. He is our heavenly *Father* with all of the prerogatives and privileges parenthood entails. God loves us, comforts us, encourages us, teaches us – and, yes – hears us.

He takes our lives and every aspect of them personally.

Every prayer we pray is weighed against God's plan for us. He is such a good Father, how could we ever neglect the privileges of prayer?

Father, create in me a passion for Your answers to prayer – to be alone with You each day.

Mark Thornbrugh

Day 36

Grieve Over Sin

Many years ago, my family made a trip to Mexico. We entered an ornately decorated cathedral. As we came out, we saw a young man sitting in the center of the walkway. He was blind. He had no shirt or shoes. He simply sat in the open sun, holding a tin cup and mumbling for help. It was a terrible sight that stuck vividly in my mind. He was totally dependent on what others did for him.

One of the basic meanings of the word "prayer" is to beg. To pray, we must understand that, in a real sense, we are just as helpless before God as the beggar is before men.

We must come before God's throne as a humble beggar, pleading for His help. To be humble is to recognize our unworthiness before a holy God. The humble servant seeks forgiveness.

For thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy; I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones.

Who does the Lord promise to revive? The humble one filled with sorrow for sin. Prayer begins with humble confession.

Isaiah 57:15 (KJV)

*Father, only You can search me.
Show me every hindrance to intimacy with You.
I want to come to you with honest lips and a broken heart –
cleanse me and renew me for Your service.*

Ricky Lee

Day 37

Examine Yourself

Search me, O God, and know my heart; Try me and know my anxious thoughts; And see if there be any hurtful way in me, And lead me in the everlasting way.

Psalm 139:23-24

How are you doing on your daily spiritual exam?

Is Christ still on the throne in your heart? Are there any parts not yielded to him unconditionally?

Do you have anxious thoughts? Prayer is laying everything out before God. Peter tells us to cast all of our anxiety on the Lord. (1 Pet. 5:7)

Ask yourself, "How am I dealing with my anxieties?" We have to give up our self-sufficiency to experience God's sufficiency. This is where Satan can tempt us. In living the anxious life, we impact negatively all those around us.

I think you get the idea – you and I need to get before the Lord in prayer.

Go through Psalm 139:23-24, pausing over each part to let God speak to you. Respond obediently in prayer and live the everlasting way. Soar on strong, healthy wings. May your walk and witness lead many others to join you.

Father, thoroughly sift my heart and expose everything that offends you in my heart and in my life, so that I will not hinder what You want me to do in my church – be useful to the Master.

Bill Bullington

Day 38

Follow Him in Every Decision

*I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now.
Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth:*

...

John 16:12-13 (KJV)

Some time ago, my wife and I drove separately to a retreat center in Hot Springs, Arkansas. Because I was preaching a Sunday night service 200 miles away, my wife decided to leave home early and make her way to the hotel. She had some difficulty finding her way, but eventually she made it there safely.

Several hours later, I drove into town and experienced the same difficulties she had in finding the hotel. I called her on my cell phone and she guided me through town, directing me at each turn and intersection. Step-by-step, she helped me find my way to the hotel. She was my guide.

In verse 13 of this passage, the Holy Spirit is called our guide. The Holy Spirit is assigned the task of communicating truth and insight that we need from Jesus every day – but not all at once.

Jesus understands that we are weak and limited in our ability to process and apply truth. As the Holy Spirit continues the earthly ministry of Jesus Christ, He guides us incrementally – step by step. The Apostle Paul would later caution us to walk with the Spirit (Galatians 5:16) in this way: by keeping in step with Him on a moment-by-moment basis (Galatians 5:25).

*Father, I want to be conformed to Your will in every decision.
Enable me to be sensitive to the leading of Your Spirit.*

Don Pucik

Day 39

Don't Miss the Meetings

And you will seek Me and find Me, when you search for Me with all your heart.

Jeremiah 29:13

Human nature is not naturally bent toward God and His righteousness. We must remain committed to continually renewing our dedications and devotions to Jesus. One of the most effective tools for renewal is a revival meeting.

The spiritual preparation and process of conducting a revival meeting encourages a deep and broad work of God in our hearts. We, as followers of Jesus Christ, need times of revival.

Our devotions to Christ are always under attack. Our spiritual growth and achievement of yesterday is not designed to sustain spiritual vigor for today.

Make a heart commitment to attend every service of the revival meetings or harvest events being held by your church. The particular service that may be the most difficult to attend might be the experience of God's Word that you need the most.

God examines our hearts as He evaluates us. Who and what we are in daily life are products of our hearts. Revival meetings are times to be challenged and encouraged through fellowship, songs, prayers and the Word of God.

Father, please draw the people to my church that need to be there. Prepare each heart, including mine, to be completely transformed in Your presence.

Larry White

Day 40

Look for a Royal Visit from Heaven

Revival is that strange and sovereign work of God in which He visits His own people – restoring, reanimating, and releasing them into the fullness of His blessing.”

– Stephen Olford

Have you ever looked forward to special visitors coming to see you? At times we anticipate the visit of old friends we haven't seen in years. The expectancy of a special guest is something that brings excitement to our lives.

David expressed a spiritual thirst for God. This man after God's own heart earnestly wanted to know and experience God. His heart cry for revival is seen in these words:

O God, thou art my God; early will I seek thee: my soul thirsteth for thee, my flesh longeth for thee in a dry and thirsty land, where no water is

Psalm 63:1 (KJV)

As Arkansas Baptists, we are longing for God to bring a fresh work of revival across our state. In churches across Arkansas, God wants to restore, reanimate and release His blessings.

If we are to see real simultaneous revivals across Arkansas – God coming among His people – it will require opening the door of our lives in order to host a royal visitor!

*Father, I long for you to visit our churches – I am thirsty.
Only You can satisfy the longings of my soul
and the souls of countless others across our state.*

Ken Shaddox