



How To Truly Start a Revival

*“So I gave my attention to the Lord God to seek Him by prayer and supplications, with fasting, sackcloth and ashes. I prayed to the LORD my God and confessed and said, ‘Alas, O LORD, the great and awesome God, who keeps His covenant and lovingkindness for those who love Him and keep His commandments, **WE** have sinned, committed iniquity, acted wickedly and rebelled, even turning aside from Your commandments and ordinances.’”*

Daniel 9:3-5

*“O LORD God of Israel, You are righteous, for **WE** have been left an escaped remnant, as it is this day; behold, **WE** are before You in **OUR** guilt, for no one can stand before You because of this.”*

Ezra 9:15

*“**WE** have acted very corruptly against You and have not kept the commandments, nor the statutes, nor the ordinances which You commanded Your servant Moses.”*

Nehemiah 1:7

Why is it that revivals began in the Bible with the prayers of righteous men who were innocent of the sins for which they interceded? Neither Daniel, Ezra, nor Nehemiah were guilty of committing the sins which they detailed in their prayers to God, yet they included themselves in their use of the pronouns “we” and “our”. They always included themselves, never pointing the finger at “them” or “their” or “those culprits”. When it comes to sin amongst God’s people, the heart of the righteous includes themselves in their pleas to God on the group’s behalf. I would suggest that this is the approach which is needed in order to effect a revival in the western church today. The righteous need

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to pray for our sin, the sins of the church, as if they're their own.

I realize we have many faithful watchmen who are sounding the alarm. The church is without excuse when it comes to the personalities, false teaching, and false shepherds it's allowed to take over in many places. But I've been equally frustrated in seeking what to do about it. Just sounding the alarm has not been enough for me. Some part of my spirit has been persistently returning to the notion that there is something further that can be done. Just as people can be lost to false teaching, I know my God is capable of bringing them back. But how? For starters, there's the biblical examples such as Daniel, Ezra, and Nehemiah among others.

A close friend of mine actually took the time to write some prayers along these lines for his home church to pray together. I've adapted them into what follows in the hopes that we who see the truth of things will not simply observe from the sidelines, but intercede from the heart on behalf of the whole church – **OUR** church, that **WE** might confess the sins which need to be addressed as a first step towards true spiritual reconciliation and recovery from what has taken root.

Don't send me an email to make the case that your particular group or a congregation you know of is exempt from these things and therefore not in need of this prayer. That only means you don't get the salient point that it's those of us in such groups upon whom the responsibility actually falls to pray like this for the whole body of Christ. So please pray with me...

Hear us, Lord Jesus!

You are the Alpha and Omega who created us and saved us by
Your grace.

You are the Lamb of God who has taken away our sins and shed
Your own blood for the New Covenant.

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You are the Light of the world who brought us truth and grace and the gift of the Holy Spirit.

Forgive us, Lord, for we have sinned against You.
We have failed to seek You with all our heart.
We have not left everything and followed You.
We have neglected to hide Your Word in our heart.
We have cheapened the grace by which You set us free.
We have loved the world and the things of the world.
We have quenched the Spirit shamelessly.
We have failed to love one another as You have loved us.
We have cherished our own forgiveness while failing to forgive those who offend us.
We have prayed against our enemies rather than for them.
We have openly and shamelessly sinned against You.
We have neglected Your bride, the church.

Moreover, we have not listened to Your servants the Apostles and the prophets, who taught in Your name and gave us the keys to the kingdom.

Righteousness and truth belong to You, O Lord, but to us open shame—and so it is in Your church this day.
Our leaders make alliances with politicians and presidents.
Our shepherds lead us to barren pastures, feeding us with the musings of men rather than the words of life.
Our bishops have become an abomination, lusting for that which is hideous rather than that which is holy.
Our pastors crave success, making crowds rather than disciples.
Our teachers have taught, “Make them laugh! Tell good stories! Entertain them!”
The seat of elders has become the seat of trustees.
Our deacons serve milk rather than meat, and forsaking the widow, the orphan and the prisoner.

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We have strayed like lost sheep.

We have mingled with the world and accepted its pleasures.

We have hoarded our material blessings to make our lives comfortable.

We have lusted for leisure rather than eternal life.

We have invested in recreation rather than the new creation.

We have turned a deaf ear to the pleas of the persecuted.

We have absolved ourselves of the responsibility to feed the hungry –

We have said,

“It is too great a task.”

“It is beyond our ability.”

“It is the responsibility of presidents and nations.”

We have tired of hearing the cries of the unborn.

We have tolerated the depravities of men in the name of entertainment.

We have filled our time with feeding our eyes rather than our souls.

Open shame belongs to us, O Lord, to our shepherds, our pastors, our bishops, our elders, our deacons, our leaders, our sheep, because we have sinned against You.

We have forgotten the Word of Truth.

We fill your services with chatter.

We entertain rather than disciple.

We accept great audiences at the expense of making obedient followers.

We have laid aside the Word of God for the teachings of men, and have sought to inspire by clever sermons rather than the truth of God's Word.

We have invested more in music than discipleship in the Word.

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We have replaced precepts for stories, and instruction for inspiring tales.

We have invested more in the medium than in the convicting truths of God's Word.

We have resorted to entertainment to keep the uncommitted satisfied.

We have forsaken the teaching of the Word that we may not offend the uncommitted.

Our leaders have bowed to growth rather than to making disciples. Our elders have become members of a board rather than the godly men of the community.

Our pastors have withheld prophecy so as not to offend those who sin openly.

Our deacons spend more on our own buildings rather than building the kingdom through missions.

Our leaders have relied upon mammon rather than trusting in the Spirit.

Our elders have built houses of cedar at the expense of building temples for the Holy Spirit.

Our pastors placate the crowds with humor and wit, while souls wither and waste away.

Our deacons have sought to control rather than build up the kingdom through His Word.

We have refused to listen to what the Lord has said: *"Sanctify them in the Word. Your Word is truth."*

To the Shepherd and Bishop of our souls belong grace and truth, redemption and the forgiveness of our sins, yet we have sinned against You.

We have heard the voice and known the voice, yet we have not followed the voice of our Shepherd.

We are the light of the world and the salt of the earth, a city set on a hill which cannot be hidden, yet we have become the world itself so that it is seen by no one.

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We are to let our light shine in such a way that the peoples may
see our good works and glorify our Father who is in heaven, yet
we have let our lamps grow dim.

We have sinned, O Lord, we have sinned.

Prayerfully Offered In His Love,

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