

Let's Pray Through The Book Of Acts...For Revival By Armin Gesswein

Classic Christian Writings:

Many in our land are praying for revival, and the prayer movement is ongoing. All of us agree that the Bible is our one real Prayer Book. We are also acquainted with the concept that the best way to pray is to "pray the Scriptures." That means we "plead the promises"--pray God's language--pray God's own Word back to Him. All of this inspires faith. Without faith prayer goes nowhere. Nothing happens. It is not biblical. It is not really Christian praying. (See James 1.)

God followed up on all of this in me, and suddenly was urging me to pray now through the book of Acts. Go slowly--surely--let the words hit me, and also inspire a lot of other praying as I do so--often get on my knees--don't hurry it--wait on the Lord as you see them doing in Acts 1. Be free to use helps, good commentaries, etc. Keep right at it.

And encourage others to do this in their own prayer life and do it in their own way. Yes, urge ministers to disciple their leaders and churches to pray for revival by praying through the book of Acts--the greatest book on revival ever written!

We all need new challenges in prayer, especially when it comes to praying for revival. No praying is more general than the praying for revival. That's the trouble with it: it is more general than specific. We let up easily and quickly lose altitude. The Acts keeps us focused, and makes revival very specific.

Listen to what Albert Barnes has to say about this in his famous "Barnes Notes on Acts." In the introduction he says: "This book (Acts) shows that revivals of religion are to be expected in the church...If by means of revivals the Holy Spirit chose at first to bless the preaching of the truth, the same thing is to be expected still. If in this way the Gospel was at first spread among the nations, then we are to infer that this will be the mode in which it will finally spread and triumph in the world."

(Who was Albert Barnes? He was a leading Presbyterian minister of a church in Philadelphia. A contemporary of Charles G. Finney, and experienced a lot of revival in his congregation. It has been said that revival in his church was not the brush-fire kind, but more like a coal fire which kept on burning long and strong. He would get up at 4 a.m. and walk to his study--his sanctuary. There he prayed, and there he wrote his famous "Barnes Notes" of the New Testament books. His book of Acts is weighed in the balances of that sanctuary, and when Albert Barnes writes of revival I want to stop--look--and listen!)

My prayer: Lord, enlarge our steps and quicken our pace for revival--according to Your Word. Make us book of Acts Christians, and make our churches book of Acts churches. Make us strong in prayer, and in the power of the Holy Spirit.