

**Articles and Sermons :: Prayer and the Coming Kingdom - David Butts**

**Prayer and the Coming Kingdom - David Butts - posted by AbideinHim (), on: 2019/4/18 10:40**

God is calling His church to prayer as a way of preparing for the soon return of His Son. In a very real sense, it is a John the Baptist callingâ€prepare the way for the Lord!

In most cases, God does nothing on earth relating to humans apart from prayer. When God is preparing to do something, He stirs up His people to pray. That was the case when He sent His Son into the world 2,000 years ago. He had two elderly intercessors, Anna and Simeon, who were passionately praying for the coming Messiah. We have every reason to believe that He is doing the same today.

If that is the case, then there is nothing more important for the church today than to learn to step into her role as a praying church. Prayer can no longer be seen as a side issue, just for the â€super spiritual.â€ It is at the heart of what God is desiring to do in the world today. Spirit-led prayer will center around three concepts: revival praying, evangelistic praying, and watchmen praying.

#### Revival Praying

God is calling His people to wake up! â€Wake up, O sleeper, rise from the dead, and Christ will shine on youâ€ (Eph. 5:14). Revival is a time when a sleeping church wakes up and begins to experience the presence of Christ in a fresh, new way. There is no doubt of the desperate need for revival or spiritual awakening in the church today. Any student of revival will tell you that God always sets His people to prayer in anticipation of an awakening.

For decades, there have been those in the United States, and many other nations, who have had the foresight both to see the need for revival and to begin laying the foundation of prayer for a fresh move of God. That movement of prayer is intensifying as more and more believers are beginning to see the desperate needs of our nation and world and are understanding that only God can meet those needs. Ministries are springing up to build an increasing cry for revival in our day. Many are crying out as Charles Spurgeon did, â€Oh! Men and brethren, what would this heart feel if I could but believe that there were some among you who would go home and pray for a revival â€ men whose faith is large enough, and their love fiery enough, to lead them from this moment to exercise unceasing intercessions that God would appear among us and do wondrous things here, as in the times of former generations.â€

Revival praying is more than just asking for revival as a part of a long list of things you want from God. It involves positioning yourself before the Lord in humility and repentance. This is a prayer that recognizes your own role in the sad condition of the church and society and cries out for forgiveness. It is a prayer of desperation that believes the Lordâ€™s intervention is our only hope. Revival praying prepares the way for the Holy Spirit to come in transformative power.

One of the great struggles in revival praying is the amount of faith required to continue steadfast in prayer. This is not a three-step plan to change the world in three weeks or less. It is a determination to pray until you see God move or you die in the effort. It is John Knox crying out, â€Give me Scotland or I die!â€ It is a faith effort that prays regardless of what you see happening around you. It is a commitment to pray until you see fulfilled what was spoken by the prophet Habakkuk, â€For the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, as the waters cover the seaâ€ (Hab. 2:14).

#### Evangelistic Praying

The second area of prayer that marks the end-time church is evangelistic prayer. One of the clearest indicators of the soon return of Jesus is the progress of the Gospel. Jesus said in Matthew 24:14, â€And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come.â€

Martin Lloyd-Jones powerfully phrased it this way, â€The main reason we should be praying about revival is that we are anxious to see Godâ€™s name vindicated and His glory manifested. We should be anxious to see something happening that will arrest the nations, all the peoples, and cause them to stop and think again.â€

In our day, where the church is praying the most, it is growing the most. Prayer is fueling evangelism in amazing ways. Several years ago, my wife, Kim, and I had the opportunity to visit Indonesia for the World Prayer Assembly. It seems like a strange place for a Christian prayer gathering. Indonesia has a larger Muslim population than any other nation. But the church there is growing rapidly, being fueled by hundreds of day and night prayer centers. Indonesian believers are coming together to pray in extraordinary ways and God is responding to their prayers.

God is calling the church to pray to the Lord of the Harvest for workers in the harvest fields of the earth. In Matthew 13:39, Jesus said, "The harvest is the end of the age...." The Lord is using all available means to bring in all who are being called to Him. Our job is to pray and share, that the Lord's Body would include everyone who will respond to the message of Christ. Andrew Murray once said, "The man who mobilizes the Christian church to pray will make the greatest contribution to world evangelization in history."

#### Watchmen Praying

The third area of prayer is watchmen praying. In Old Testament culture, watchmen/guards were placed around communities for protection and to warn of danger. In Isaiah 62:6-7, God pulls together prayer and the watchmen concept for us and literally establishes this as a way of prayer. "I have posted watchmen on your walls, O Jerusalem; they will never be silent day or night. You who call on the Lord, give yourselves no rest, and give Him no rest till He establishes Jerusalem and makes her the praise of the earth."

The great need for a praying church today is for those who will stand on the walls of their communities and nations to watch and pray. Watchmen pay close attention to what is happening in the world around them and, at the same time, are careful to see what is happening in the Spirit. Watchmen are asking the Lord to step into situations to bring about His will and purposes. Watchmen also sound the alarm to others, that a unified movement of praying Christians can be mobilized in times of crisis.

One of the characteristics of watchmen praying, according to Isaiah, is "day and night" praying. "Never be silent day or night" demonstrates the seriousness of what it means to be a watchman.

Throughout the years, Jesus Christ has stirred His people to this kind of powerful intercession and worship. The Moravians in the early 1700s were a prime example of day and night prayer. They established a 24/7 prayer meeting that lasted non-stop for more than 100 years! It resulted in a powerful missions movement.

Missionary pioneer Hudson Taylor understood this type of passionate prayer: "Since the days of Pentecost, has the whole church ever put aside other work and waited upon Him for ten days, that the Spirit's power might be manifested? We give too much attention to method and machinery and resources, and too little to the source of power."

In our time, day and night prayer is again becoming a mark of a praying church. ...God is clearly calling His people back to extraordinary prayer. We are once again hearing Jesus say to us, "Could you men not keep watch with Me for one hour?" (Matt. 26:40).

For many reading this, the idea of day and night praying seems like a fantasy. My challenge to you is to not look to your circumstances, but to the vision of what God is desiring to do in us and through us. God does not despise the day of small things (Zech. 4:10). Do not quit. Stretch your faith.

Whether we are involved in day and night prayer, or praying for revival and world evangelization, our purpose is to agree with the teaching of Jesus that His kingdom would come and His will would be done on earth as it is in heaven. The kingdom that Jesus declared was not of this world, is still intended to impact this world as no other kingdom ever has or will. The frontline of the advance of Christ's kingdom is a praying church!

“Taken from *Forgotten Power: A Simple Theology For A Praying Church* by David Butts