

# **SECTION 7**

## **PRAYER SUMMITS**

# Prayer Revival Grows Nationwide

Compiled By P. Douglas Small

An exceptional prayer movement is gaining ground in America and around the world. This grass roots prayer movement may be the forerunner to America's only hope, a revival that results in the spiritual rebirth of the nation.

Andrew Murray observed there were five phases to every historic revival: (1) IntercessionXa movement of prayer; (2) RevelationXJesus becomes real to people; (3) ConsecrationXGod's people become earnest about their lives and relationships, rededicating themselves to God and one another; (4) RevitalizationXpurity returns to the church, fruit increases, new life is evidenced; (5) ExpansionXa general awakening occurs, the community is stirred.

Christian statesman Edwin Orr wrote: AWhenever God is ready to do something new with His people, He always sets them to praying.≡

The first Great Awakening was first a prayer revival. Jonathan Edwards, in 1746, called for Aconcerts of prayer≡ to be held both in Europe and the New World.

That prayer revival burst forth into a great move of God that affected the shape of our nation's view of itself at the time of its infancy. It changed the climate in the land and produced a different America than we would have ever known had that first Great Awakening not occurred.

If God changed the course of the nation at the beginning, can He do it again? Certainly. He can. But will we do our part?

Paul Cedar, chairman of the Mission America organization and the previous president of the Evangelical Free Church of America said, AWithout a doubt, the major opportunity before us is the potential of a historic revival akin to the first and second Great Awakenings .... The encouraging sign of an impending awakening is the grass roots prayer movement God is raising up throughout this nation among pastors, denominations, congregations, families and individuals.≡

Each of the Great Awakenings was preceded by a prayer renewal. What is also interesting is that the ignition for those revivals came from prayer movements that were tightly focused. The first Great Awakening was birthed out of a clergy prayer revival. The second Great Awakening rose out of the hearts of missionaries and propelled an international mission-evangelism movement. The third Great Awakening was likewise ignited by a tightly focused group.



But the current prayer renewal cannot be associated with any one group. It reaches beyond denominations.

National youth leaders have formed a prayer forum. Missionary executives, directors of Christian foundations, pastors in cities, have all begun to gather for prayer as if some invisible and inaudible signal has sounded and all feel impelled to pray together for revival.

David Wilkerson two years ago shut down the programs of the Time Square Church in New York to focus exclusively on prayer for New York City. In a similar move, the New Providence Presbyterian Church in New York City is becoming a center for renewal. Ben Patterson has placed the need for prayer for revival at the centerpiece of his preaching and leadership for the entire Presbyterian (U.S.A.) denomination.

Other cities are experiencing a similar stirring. Pastors in Tampa just completed their third Prayer Summit in 12 months and plan another this fall. That summit is to be followed by a call to the entire Bay Area for churches to join together to seek the Lord for family and friends that need to know Christ as Savior.

Philadelphia pastors have conducted several prayer summits as well, and report a knitting together of pastors whose only concern is for spiritual awakening. They have divided the city into 35 regions and each area has become a prayer cell.

For almost a decade, leaders in Cleveland, Ohio, have been trying to respond to God's call to prayer. Recently, as many as 7,000 people have taken part in citywide prayer rallies.

In Minneapolis, 300 congregations have made a seven-year commitment to pray for revival in that city. Five states in the New England area are likewise being stirred to seek God for renewal. Regional prayer rallies are being sponsored. In Los Angeles, as many as 1,000 pastors now gather together four times a year to spend a half day in prayer for their city and the nation.

The Church of God launched a call to prayer focused on its retired pastors. Expecting that a response of 1,000 enrollments in AThe PrayerBorne program would be exceptional, the denomination has seen almost 5,000 participants come forward to bear the work of God as soldiers of prayer.

Southern Baptist leaders are calling their churches to conduct Asolemn assemblies in which personal examination, repentance and prayer for national revival are the focus.

Robert Coleman says three elements bring us to the threshold of revival. First, citywide stirrings of prayer, prayer summits and the like. Second, pastors coming together to pray for their city. Third, a hunger for revival among youth.

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If Coleman is right, then we can expect at some time near the close of this decade a third wave of the Holy Spirit to sweep our nation, renewing the church, restoring purity and power, and saving the lost.

David Barrett, a statistician who observes movements in the Christian community worldwide, said that the prayer movement is staggering in terms of its depth. He claims 170 million Christians are committed to daily prayer for a worldwide spiritual awakening and the evangelization of the world. Twenty million of these Christians feel prayer is their primary mission. Barrett has identified 1,400 prayer networks around the world.

The movement is multidenominational. Walls between groups are falling. Baptist and Pentecostals are coming together. Sacramental churches and nonsacramental churches are reaching out to one another. All ages are involved in the movement.

The movement is multicultural and multilingual. In Boston recently, 800 Christians from 75 churches in the city center came together to pray.

And the movement is international. South Africa has groups praying. In Korea, 100,000 high school students met for three days of prayer and praise. A prayer march in that country drew half a million people.

What effect is all this prayer having? It may be too early to tell what could happen. In some ways, the movement appears to be just now gaining momentum. There is still resistance to the issue of repentance and the need for renewal in some segments of the church. There is still a preoccupation with pet doctrines and self-advancing theologies in other sectors of the church. And there is still a lot of adherence to walls and distinctions that separate us. But we could learn a lesson from recent history about the power of prayer, if we would just take a look at the former Soviet Union.

In 1987, as the Soviet Union approached the 70th anniversary of the Bolshevik Revolution, Christians quietly began to lay claim to a promise from the Book of Daniel, that 70 years of captivity imposed on God's people was long enough. If captivity was to be over after seven decades for Israel, then it should be over for them as well.

That idea sparked a quiet prayer revival in the underground church of Russia. They became convinced that if they prayed, God would set them free. In 1988 and subsequently in 1989, Russia erupted with changes that answered the prayers of the church.

David McKenna, author of *The Coming Great Awakening*, observed in a recent article in the *Asbury Bulletin* that in Africa each species has its own watering hole and protects that water as a part of its turf. When drought comes, some of the watering holes dry up, and turf wars erupt among the various species of animals for rights to the water.

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If the drought persists, in desperation, all the animals will find themselves at the same watering hole. Enormous discipline now takes the place of previous skirmishes. Lions and tigers, elephants and giraffes, rhinos and zebrasXthe predators and the preyXare all together. This is their only option if they=re to survive.

I wonder if God is not trying to get us to the same watering hole. Our distinctives will not go away. Nor should they. There is truth that all of us possess. We need one another. God has divided truth among us. But our distinctives must not be championed above the command of Christ, to reach a lost world.

One thing is clear. No one denomination has been able to accomplish the task alone. The parachurch organizations that are artificially uniting us by coordinating our efforts cannot accomplish the task alone. If we could become one long enough to meet at the same watering hole and demonstrate our peace with one another, while we call out to God at the same time for our need for a fresh rain, that would send a powerful message to the thirsty world to Acome to the water.≡ Maybe then we could fulfill John 17 X that you may be one, that the world might believe.

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# THE MEANING AND PURPOSE OF A PRAYER SUMMIT

By Dr. Joe Aldrich

I define a *Prayer Summit* as:

A prolonged, four day, life-changing worship experience attended by a diversity of Christian leaders from specific, targeted communities whose sole purpose is to seek God, His kingdom, and His righteousness with the expectation that He will create and guide them through a humbling, healing, uniting process that will lead them to a unity of heart, mind, and mission and will qualify them for the blessing of God.≡

The Acts 2 church had a unity of heart, mind, and mission, and God added **daily** to their number those who were being saved. The bottom-line question facing Christian leaders is **Aw hat would it take to initiate and sustain a work of God in a specific geographical community?**≡ In other words, **Aw hat would it take to see John 17 lived out in answer to the Son=s prayer?**≡

## HEAVENLY SPLIT

Satan split the angelic ranks, the first family, the Davidic Kingdom, and has quite successfully split the Church into 22,000 denominations. Division is his forte. Three times Jesus asked His Father to protect believers and make them one Aas we are one.≡ Unity is of utmost importance to God. The Trinity is a model of perfect unity. They do everything in full support of each other. There is a unanimity in all they do, say and think, and yet each retains individual integrity as a functioning being.

The Lord prayed in John 17 that the world (used 18 times in that prayer alone) and God=s glory (used 9 times) will somehow get together **so that the world will know that God sent His Son, and display that God loves them.** In other words, *if they understand Christ=s divine origin and the Father=s love, they=re very close to the cross!* It should not surprise us that unity is **the highest form of evangelism.** The message of unity is revolutionary. At the core of the universe exists a triune God who dwells together in unity. If only a shattered, broken, divided world could catch a glimpse of this unity! Meanwhile, churches continue to split, division reigns, competition and jealousy abound, pastors experience moral failure, homes fall apart, and dreams are shattered.

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## THE SECOND INCARNATION

God=s plan is to allow His reborn children to be the vehicle by which He reveals His existence in complete unity. We are inducted into the family of God as members of the second incarnation, called to make visible the invisible God. How? Unity!

***AHow beautiful it is when brothers dwell together in unity. . .  
there God commands His blessing.≅ X Psalm 133:1***

So how do you get Akingdom building,≅ denominationally bound, doctrinally separate church leaders to recognize in every city there is only one Church, with many congregations? How will they overcome the division and pride that thwarts God=s full blessing? What would unity look like in a larger community of faith? I thought of bringing in some ecclesiastical Aheavyweights≅ and turning them loose on the pastors in a given area. You and I know that wouldn=t work. And if it did, any Asuccess≅ would only be short-lived.

## HUMILITY AND THE BLESSING OF GOD

God always resists the proud, but gives grace (enablement) to the humble. He exalts the humble at the proper time. That=s it. Pride and humility are *antithetical*. There will be no unity without true humility. Repentance and reconciliation are the kinds of things experienced when genuine humility is achieved.

What we need is not another seminar. What=s needed is an *environment* where Church leaders feel safe and can leave behind their differences. An environment where they will then be surprised by what they *agree* on and *share*. I concluded that this environment would be a 3-4 day season in His presence, to bring us to a point of brokenness and humility. That can=t be preached or taught. Leaders need to spend four days with their common King!

## THE PROCESS

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The key to true humility, confession of sin and deliverance is prolonged time in His presence. Time to focus on Him X with no other agenda. No church business is allowed. No strategizing or networking. No one directing except the Holy Spirit. Generally, no prayers for Aproblems back home≡ are introduced. *What we need is time in His presence, to worship Him hour after hour.* In a Prayer Summit, we may sing over 100 songs a day. Scripture is read, prayers are spontaneously given. We stay vertical, fixing our eyes and hearts on our Savior. Often, the presence of the LORD is so strong no one dare speak. We stand on holy ground. Men lie on the carpet, prostrate before the King. Tears flow as God begins the breaking process. The process has five parts, as follows:

**Holiness ∃ Humility ∃ Unity ∃ Community ∃ Impact**

There will be no impact without a healthy community of faith. If you want a city-wide revival, you need a city-wide church.

There will be no community without unity. A house or church divided against itself will not stand.

There will be no unity without humility. Here is where repentance and reconciliation usually take place. Can you imagine pastors asking forgiveness from fellow pastors in the community? We=ve seen it happen at countless Prayer Summits.

The significant, vital changes that begin at a Prayer Summit continue long after the Summit experience. Denominational barriers that came down stay down. Relationships develop. Joint church services are planned, and pastors exchange pulpits with their rediscovered brothers X brothers who once viewed each other quite differently. Covenants are often made to enable believers to truly become the *one church* in their community. Many church leaders who encounter the LORD in a fresh way at a Prayer Summit begin meeting together for prayer. They=ve been changed by a prolonged time with God, and they can=t return to Abusiness as usual.≡ They come together to worship and pray to their mutual LORD. They become best friends and co-laborers. They begin experiencing the reality of what Jesus prayed for in John 17, and start tasting God=s blessings as never before. . .

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## THE MOVEMENT & THE MINISTRY:

How International Renewal Ministries Serves  
in the Growing Movement of God

### THE MOVEMENT

Around the world, the Spirit of God is stirring Christians to *seek His face*. We are witnessing an *unprecedented hunger for genuine intimacy with God*, and *God is showing up again and again*. Particularly, pastors are being impressed by the Spirit to seek the LORD for an extended time. As a result, they are being humbled, broken and renewed as sins are confessed and lives are healed. Relationships are restored and they are experiencing a renewed spiritual power X in the ministries they felt called to earlier in life.

### THE MINISTRY

The International Renewal Ministries (IRM) team seeks individually greater intimacy with Christ, and corporately a visitation by the Spirit of God upon His people. The desire is that we serve as a catalyst for an organic unity in the body of Christ that will release the blessing of God. We desire a fresh touch of God in heaven-sent revival upon the Church and its leadership, resulting in widespread evangelization of the lost, and leading to a change in society. IRM exists to facilitate renewal and revival in the United States and the world, with a focus on church leadership.

### SPIRITUAL ENVIRONMENTALISM & THE SPIRIT OF GOD

**A Aspiritual environmentalist**≡ is a Christian who is sensitive to his/her environment. They are always asking themselves the questions **AWhat is the spirit of God saying?**≡ and **AHow can I best respond to Him?**≡

### PROVIDING A SPIRITUALLY SENSITIVE ENVIRONMENT

**A Prayer Summit** is an *environment* that is sensitive to the spiritual climate of our day. It is a *life-changing* experience because Christians gather with *no other agenda than to seek their God*. Having tried almost everything else, many have found the biblical simplicity of returning to their God not only refreshing, but *absolutely essential* to stem the tide of personal, regional, national and global decline. *It is time to seek the LORD, until He reigns righteousness on us. . .*

## **AN EVENT OR A MOVEMENT? HOW A PRAYER SUMMIT FITS IN**

**History shows** that the Western Church is prolific in becoming event oriented at the expense of Spirit sensitivity. The tendency with time is to become event-centered, but after facilitating more than 500 Prayer Summits since 1989, the IRM Team has made every effort to stay true to the LORD by *resisting an event mentality*. A Prayer Summit is a vital *part* of what God is doing in these last days. *Our hope is not in an event or a series of events, but in the LORD*. A Prayer Summit is *not* the objective *X our objective is all over the world*. *We dare not stop short of this vision by thinking the journey is over when a Prayer Summit is over*. In fact, *the Summit experience is only the beginning*.

## **THREE TIMES A CHARM?**

*How many Prayer Summits should a pastor attend? How many prayer Summits should a region have?* The Prophet Hosea said it well, *It is time to seek the LORD X until He reigns righteousness on us.*≡ Since a Prayer Summit is an environment where this happens, there is something to be said about persevering in prayer by repeatedly meeting with fellow Christians with a similar passion *X until the LORD reigns righteousness on us*. *The Scriptural mandate is clear*. We do not place importance upon the number of times a pastor or region has participated in a Summit, but in *whether or not the LORD has in fact reigned His righteousness upon them*.

## **WHAT HAPPENS AFTER A PRAYER SUMMIT?**

**Since the entire movement and ministry are based on relationships rather than events**, careful care is taken to maintain the unity of the Spirit that begins at a Prayer Summit. The International Renewal Ministries Team prayerfully seeks to strengthen the *relationships* that naturally begin in such significant appointments with God. *We want God=s best for pastors, the flocks they shepherd, and the Kingdom of God around the world*. *To ensure this is realized, we desire to develop an ongoing dialogue with local leaders, providing numerous services under the directive of the Holy Spirit*. Prayer Summit planning, coordination and facilitation are just a few ways we serve. . .

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## THE RESULTS OF A PASTORS= PRAYER SUMMIT

The impact of a four-day Prayer Summit on the lives of pastors reaches beyond each leader=s personal relationship with Jesus Christ. Often, the mutual experience of worship, confession and cleansing creates a spiritual bond that enables the men to unite and agree together to do the following:

- Exalt Christ in my life and in our community
  - Maintain the unity of the body of Christ in our community
  - Love my brothers and sisters through my actions
  - Seek Christ=s righteousness
  - Proclaim Christ to the lost souls in our community
  - Meet regularly with my brothers for prayer
  - Be totally transparent and confidential with at least one other brother in ministry
  - Love into the fellowship of prayer other pastors who are not able to participate in the Prayer Summit
  - Pray for one another=s ministry from the pulpit
  - Call two or three pastors each week to pray over the phone
  - Pray for, rather than criticize, one another
  - Attend another Prayer Summit within a year in order to persevere in prayer and maintain Athe unity of the Spirit.≡
  - Contribute to a community-wide celebration of unity for our churches
  - Plan quarterly day of prayer
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- Encourage wives to attend a Pastors= Wives= Prayer Summit
- Mobilize believers in the community for evangelism and the fulfillment of the Great Commission in this generation.

These are just *some* of the results God causes as a result of His children being in His presence for prolonged prayer and worship. *Because every Summit is unique, and the Spirit=s work so specific, it is impossible to capture everything that happens.*

The International Renewal Ministries team seeks to serve communities in an ongoing way, helping them to stay focused on Jesus Christ as we together seek the LORD for true, heaven-sent revival. In addition to providing personnel, we also have an increasing number of audio and video resources available to for the same end. Please inquire as you might have interest.

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## ORGANIZATIONAL PARADIGM SHIFT

### Institutional

Rigid Form

Person Centered

Static

Energized by Creativity/Stamina

Leader

Position

Credentials

Programs

Product

Traditions Driven

Predictable

Projectible

Factions

### Movement

Flexible Form

Holy Spirit Centered

Dynamic

Energized by Holy Spirit

Leaders

Relationship

Anointing

Prayer

Process

Needs Driven

Unpredictable

Non-projectible

Partnerships/Reconciliation

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## **PERSEVERING IN PRAYER UNTIL THE HEAVENS OPEN**

Revival is inevitable when you have a group of people who are willing to get their hearts thoroughly right with God, who are willing to persevere in prayer until the heavens are opened and God comes down, and who are willing to be used in evangelism in whatever way God leads.

X R.A. Torrey

International Renewal Ministry leaders know that one great Prayer Summit isn't all there is to revival, but it's a start. To continue what God begins takes discipline. May the following suggestions X learned from the ongoing prayer movement X serve as a useful guide for continuing prayer in your area. Pastors in a given geographical area should meet weekly, or at least bi-weekly, for prayer.

### **When meeting, they should:**

**WORSHIP GOD**  
**FOCUS ON JESUS**  
**MAINTAIN THE UNITY OF THE SPIRIT IN THE BOND OF PEACE**  
**PRAY OUT OF SCRIPTURE**  
**PRAY FOR EACH OTHER**  
**PRAY FOR THE LOST**

### **When meeting, they should avoid:**

ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE (It's a movement, not a program)  
PERSONAL AGENDAS  
POLITICAL ISSUES  
PRAYER REQUEST TIME

**MAINTAIN THE LONG TERM VISION:** don't be content with the early rains of revival.  
**LEAVE THE CONTROL** to God.  
**FOCUS ON PRAISE**, not on problems.  
**LOVE OTHER PASTORS** into the fellowship of prayer.  
**CALL OTHER PASTORS** each week to pray over the phone together.

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PRAY WITH YOUR CHURCH PEOPLE for the effectiveness of other ministries in your area.  
COMMIT TO ALWAYS SPEAKING POSITIVELY and constructively about other believers.  
ALWAYS ENCOURAGE PASTORS and people to pray (individually, via prayer meetings, etc.).  
PRAY FOR PERSONAL REVIVAL and that of the church to result in widespread evangelism and ultimately a change in society.

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## INITIATING A PRAYER SUMMIT MOVEMENT IN YOUR CITY

- STEP 1:** Contact the international or regional offices for information.
- STEP 2:** Have at least 5 pastors invite an IRM representative to talk to spiritual leaders in your area about a city-wide, prayer-driven renewal movement.
- STEP 3:** Set up an informational, vision-casting session at which an IRM representative can talk to pastors about the prayer-summit process.
- STEP 4:** Discern God=s will. Is it time to seek the Lord? Is it time for the pastors of your city to clear their calendars and cry out to God for revival? If so, contact IRM and request assistance in moving toward a Pastors= Prayer Summit for your area that will potentially involve every Bible-believing, Christ-honoring pastor in the city. Plan the summit six months to a year ahead.
- STEP 5:** IRM or a regional representative will coach a local servant-leadership team through the process of calling the pastoral community of the city to prayer. And IRM will provide quality and experienced facilitators for the actual 4-day prayer summit experience.

Contact IRM International or the Southeastern USA representative.

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**Dr. Joe Aldrich**, known affectionately as ADr. Joe,≡ served for almost 20 years as President of Multnomah College and Seminary. During his tenure, the popular Pastors= Prayer Summit Movement began and is now spread around the world as a vehicle for uniting pastors of various traditions around the experience of prayer for the purpose of spiritual renewal. Dr. Joe is the author of such books as *Lifestyle Evangelism*, *Prayer Summits* and *Reunitus*. Dr. Joe remains a popular speaker at conferences across the nation and around the world. He is known by many as a perennial favorite among the faculty of the Billy Graham School of Evangelism.

**Terry Dirks** serves as the Executive Director and Vice President of International Renewal Ministries, a division of Multnomah College and Seminary. Prior to his tenure at IRM, he served as a local, regional and state leader with the Youth for Christ organization. His heart for renewal, his concern for pastors and his burden for prayer combine in his catalytic role of encouraging whole city renewal around the world. Terry leads a team of some 80 facilitators who lead Prayer Summits in over 100 cities annually. An humble and capable leader, he exhibits a servant heart in providing leadership in a prayer movement that is now international in scope.

**P. Douglas Small** serves as the southeastern regional representative for the Prayer Summit Movement.

***For more information on this subject, please contact:***

***Terry Dirks***

International Renewal Ministries (IRM)  
8435 NE Glisan Street  
Portland, OR 97220-5814  
503/255-0332  
Fax: 503/254-1268  
E-mail: tdirks@multnomah.edu

***P. Douglas Small***

President of Alive Ministries  
IRM Southeast USA Representative  
P.O. Box 1245  
Kannapolis, NC 28082  
704/938-9111  
Fax: 704/938-1714  
E-mail: dougsmall@aol.com

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