

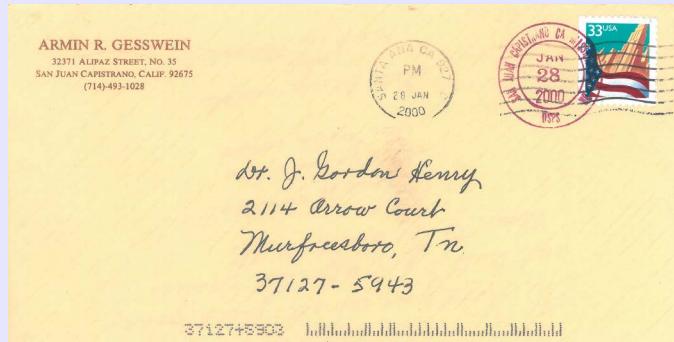
# REFLECTOR

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*"Holding Forth the Word of Life"*

June 2023

*"Wilt Thou not revive us again, that Thy people may rejoice in Thee?" (Psalm 85:6).*



Carrier Envelope from My Last Personal Letter from Armin Gesswein (1907-2001), A Friend and Mentor

*"My burden is for revival in every church. They want it: Next step: Prayer [seminars] – annually. **EVERY CHURCH TO HAVE A PRAYER COORDINATOR FOR CONSTANT PRAYER BUILD-UP OF EVERY KIND."***

*Armin Gesswein*

**"REPENT and do the FIRST WORKS" (Revelation 2:5). REVIVAL FOCUS – FIRST WORKS**

Let's go back to Jesus just before He returns to Heaven. With new zeal Jesus builds a new "house of prayer" in Jerusalem. His last work on earth was to build a Prayer Meeting. A praying congregation is established in **Acts 1**. With that act He makes all our praying the first work of the church. It is easy to forget that Pentecost and the power of the Holy Spirit came to a prayer meeting of about 120 people, and this meeting began to change the world (**Acts 2**).

Now imagine the contrast. **JESUS:** "*The one meeting I want on earth before I go to Heaven is a powerful prayer meeting.*" **SATAN:** "*The one meeting I do not want in the church is a prayer meeting. I am going to kill it, or make it so weak that it is powerless. In that way I'll kill the life of the church.*"

## THE UPPER ROOM: GOD'S REVIVAL MODEL

By Armin Gesswein

The Book of Acts is the greatest book on revivals that has ever been written—greater than Charles Finney's word or that of Jonathan Edward—*God's own Word*. I spoke one day to the Youth for Christ leaders at the Moody Church in Chicago about revival. Afterward, standing on the steps of that great church, Ken Anderson said to me, "Armin, you ought to write a book on revival." At once I said, "Ken, that book has already been written. It is the book of Acts!" It really surprised him.

I have read the Acts hundreds of times, and portions of it a few thousand times. Here is one of the plainest books in the Bible, yet I often miss or read right past what is very plain. In **chapter one** I read right past **verse 4**, in which our risen Lord gives His last, and in a real sense, His most powerful, most commanding command. He actually "charged" them, a military term, "*not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the promise of the Father*" (ASV). He literally commanded them to go to the Upper Room and to abide in prayer. And they did. In **verses 14 and 15** we read that these all, about 120, continued in prayer and supplication.

Why did they do it? Because Jesus commanded it. Our trouble today is that we have not seen the Upper Room prayer meeting as a command of Jesus. We seem to have little authority when it comes to getting our churches into prayer meetings and all that God wants to do there. I have to say to congregations, "If Jesus commanded you to go to prayer meetings, would you go?" "Well, yes," they reply, "if Jesus told me to, I would go." "Well, He does tell you, commands you, to go. Will you go?"

The Great Commission is our mission in the Church. We hold to that and uphold it. And here is the last, most forceful and imperative, of all His commandments, and we don't heed it, often don't

## PERSPECTIVES

### **"Speaking the Truth in Love"**

**Praying Pastors, Praying People = A Praying Church  
IS YOUR CHURCH A PRAYING CHURCH?**



God's written Word is Truth. Many of you who have been on our mailing list know that our masthead for the Reflector is "*Holding Forth the Word of Life*." At the same time, those who have walked with us since the 1980s will remember that another proclamation we have used is "*Speaking the Truth in Love*."

Out of the 1,755 prayer seminars I have personally conducted, hundreds of pastors confessed with tears, most publicly, asking their congregation's forgiveness that they did not have a meaningful prayer life. Many of these pastors made a commitment to their congregations in my presence that from that moment onward their leadership would prioritize prayer as a key element in the worship and work of the church. For over forty years, the prayer seminar never needed a public relations department because these pastors told their fellow pastors that they should schedule a prayer seminar in their churches. Consequently, I averaged fifty-two prayer seminars a year from 1984-2011. Our venue was full and carried me close to 3 million miles, traveling up and down our great nation and around the world teaching the power and purpose of prayer challenging my students to become **Lighthouses of Prayer** for their families, friends, community, and nation. **One reason we are keeping the Reflector ministry active is to remind pastors and church leaders of the availability of the six-hour prayer seminar.** With modern media and at least one prayer seminar a week somewhere around the world led by **Adam Nathanson** and other teachers, we would see **Lighthouses of Prayer** pushing against the spiritual darkness. The hour is late but it is never too late for God to gift the people on earth with another spiritual awakening as He has done in the past. "**DO IT AGAIN, LORD!**" IS MY PRAYER.

**Prayer is the work that must come before all other work.** When we began the prayer seminar ministry in 1980, I only knew of one similar ministry, Dick Eastman's **Change the World School of Prayer** that grew out of **World Literature Crusade (now Every Home for Christ)** founded by **Jack McAlister** (1924-2006). Jack became an avid **Doorkeeper** and was largely responsible for our work in **Pakistan**. The number teaching about prayer has greatly increased with some prayer ministries birthed through **The Prayer Seminar** [Founded as **JGHM** in 1984].

In a visit in his office at **Back to the Bible**, Lincoln, Nebraska, with **Dr. Warren Wiersbe** (1927-2019), who became my friend in 1958, I was shocked at a statement he made as he gave encouragement to expand the reach of the prayer seminar, "*If I had an opportunity to live my life over, I would go back to the early days when prayer was my top priority life and ministry. That was my power.*" Earlier, **Dr. Carl F. H. Henry** (1913-2003) had said the very same thing when he came to bring the **Staley Lectures Series** at **Northeastern Bible College** during my tenure as president.

During the foundational years for Liberty University [founded as Lynchburg Baptist College in 1971] where I served as the Vice President for Academic Affairs, **Dr. Jerry Falwell** (1933-2007) frequently spoke at the daily chapel services. He often reminded all of us the importance of prayer and contributed the spiritual power that one could sense upon entering Thomas Road Baptist Church to Sunday night prayer meetings. "*When God is about to do a work on the earth, He always starts by waking up His people and calling them back to Himself in prayer. You can trace all the great awakenings to prayer.*" Do you agree? What are you, your pastor, your church doing about it? Currently, one seldom finds a praying church in spite of the verbiage that gives lip service to the power of prayer. Frankly, most contemporary churches are **playing** churches, not **praying** churches. Believe your own eyes. Look into a mirror at your own face. It is time that we go to the Word, learn

even seem to hear it. This is a great part of our problem and weakness—getting corporate prayer and revival back into our churches (**Acts 1:4**).

In **Acts 1** we have a full account of Jesus' last day on earth and of His last things, which are now to be our first things. **His last command becomes our first responsibility.**

### SECRET OF THE UPPER ROOM

The Upper Room holds the secret of it all. There the Lord shut about 120 people in a prayer meeting and gave them the keys to the kingdom of heaven. With it He gave us His Masterpiece and His master plan for revival. He at once made it the centerpiece of the New Testament, and of history—turning *history* into *His story* for revival and for everything else, including the fulfillment of the Great Commission.

One little prayer meeting of about 120 in an Upper Room in the city of Jerusalem is to do it all? Who would believe it? Who would have thought it? No man! Men have tried to improve on that plan, but they always fail. “But dear Lord, don’t you have an alternative plan? A back-up plan, in case this one fails?”

Jesus could answer something like this: “No. I have no alternate plan. And my plan will not fail! That prayer meeting will do it all! It will be so powerful that even the gates of hell will not prevail against it. It will speedily become My church, and I’m going to change the world with it. You just read the book of Acts and you will see how I do it! “In fact, I did tell you. Were you listening? I told you My last word on earth. I never spoke to you more plainly. Did you hear Me? ‘*You will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you and will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth*’ (**Acts 1:8 NIV**). Didn’t you hear Me? I’m going to change the world through abiding prayer.”

### How Are Our Prayer Meetings?

That is the big question in all our praying for revivals. The acid test of New Testament revival is the Church. And the acid test of the Church and of the churches is prayer and prayer meetings.

The devil is no fool. He knows what’s going on in our lives, and in our churches. He also knows God’s plan. So he is very busy working overtime, to kill churches. All He has to do is kill abiding prayer and prayer meetings and that church is dead!

The Spirit of Prayer is the Spirit of Revival. The first revival in any genuine revival is a revival of prayer. The revival spirit leaves churches when true prayer meetings depart; and revival returns with the return of abiding prayer and prayer meetings. It’s that simple! And there is no other way!

Pentecost, let us not forget, came to a prayer meeting in that Upper Room and to those 120 Christians praying in one accord. There the Lord gave the standard, the pattern of revival, indeed, the pattern for every church since Pentecost.

Revival is not subtle—it is simple. Revival truth is the plainest truth in Scripture. All backsliding is from *plain* Scripture, not from all the prophetic mysteries we do not understand. Let us not complicate the message of revival! The devil has decimated and but devastated the prayer life of Christians and of their homes and of their churches. Many churches still don’t have prayer meetings. And where they do, they usually are the weakest, most anemic of all the many meetings.

But the Lord is changing this. Thank the Lord for the many new movements of prayer. We are on our way back to the Upper Room, back to the real, normal pattern of the Spirit-filled life for every Christian and for every church.

The Upper Room is God’s own master plan to bring revival! That plan has not changed; it is still God’s plan today. Will you go to the Upper Room?

***We give thanks to God always for you all, making mention of you in our prayers.***

**1 Thessalonians 1:2**

**THANKS FOR YOUR PRAYER  
AND FINANCIAL SUPPORT.**

everything we can learn about the purpose and power of prayer. Then get on board of active prayer warriors. It is time to get started and with the Holy Spirit’s help we will bind on earth what God has bound in Heaven and loose on earth what He has loosed in Heaven. Obedience by individual believers, pastors, and churches includes prayer as the priority.

Yours in Calvary love,

*J. Gordon Henry*

Zechariah 8:21b

### TOUCHING LIVES AROUND THE WORLD

#### Establishing Lighthouses of Prayer

**East-Central Africa/Martin Shikuku.** Eldoret is a large city in western Kenya and Martin’s homebase. In a recent outreach, over 1,833 were reached resulting in 168 saved; a witness was made to 22 “cousins” (sons of Ishmael). Martin has been elected to a five-year term as chairman of the Board of Trustees for the Kenya Baptist Convention. **West Africa: Nigeria/Sunday Bwanhot, Sunday Congo, Shem Kamla.** Goal: Every church a praying church. Recently, an additional 150 were trained to teach prayer seminars with the plan that these will train others to as well as conduct prayer seminars. **Europe: Spain, Switzerland/ADAM NATHANSON** conducted prayer seminars in **Madrid** and participated in a meeting of worldwide chaplains working with legislative bodies around the world. **Prayer Seminar Workbooks** were used. Let’s continue to pray and support Adam and his team and the teachers in other nations. **URGENT:** While typing this article an e-mail came from Pakistan. “Urgent. Pray for Pakistan. Check the web!”

### Notes from My Bible

#### ARMINISMS



**Note 6074.** The last thing Jesus did on earth was to build a prayer meeting.

**Note 6075.** The doorway that leads us into the Upper Room is the command of Christ (**Acts 1:4**).

**Note 6076.** The mission of Christ was successfully launched from the launching pad of prayer.

**Note 6077.** In the early church, every pastor was a praying pastor, and every Christian was a prayer meeting Christian.

**Note 6078.** In the early church everything was done by prayer.

### Freedom of the Will

We remember how Jesus said, “*...I have finished the work which Thou gavest me to do*” (**John 17:4**). That statement reveals that God [the Father] had a definite plan for Jesus’ life, that He could and did know what that plan was, and that it was possible for Him to accomplish it. That was true for Christ; it is also true for each one of us. No one of us is here by accident nor by chance. God has a plan for your life—of that you can be sure.

However, God gave to each person power of choice and freedom of will. We remember how our Lord prayed, “*...nevertheless not My will, but Thine be done*” (**Luke 22:42**). That prayer teaches us two very important truths: first, one might have a will for his own life that is contrary to God’s will for him. Second, it is possible to follow your own will and turn your back on God’s will for you. Were those two facts not true, then Christ’s prayer would be mockery.

**Charles L. Allen**

- Choice, not chance, determines eternity.
- It’s time to get started on the way home!
- When time shall be no more, you will.

### REFLECTOR

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