

# REFLECTOR

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"Holding Forth the Word of Life"

March 2022

## God Is Calling Us to Revival

Armin R. Gesswein

(November 28, 1907-March 10, 2001)

The chaplain of the United States Senate, Dr. Richard Halverson, phoned me to share his concern for revival in our nation. During our conversation he made this keen observation: "There is a revival in our land of the need for a revival."

Strangely, though, churches are missing revival while they are praying for it; missing it while quoting Scriptures—like **Second Chronicles 7:14** which promise it; missing it like a person searching for gold and not seeing the precious nugget in front of his eyes!

**Our Focus.** We miss it by **generalizing**: praying for "a great revival in our land." Or by **futurizing**: "When revival comes mighty things will happen." At the same time we fail to heed plain Scripture which calls us to repentance a repentance that will bring awakening to our churches. A minister friend of mine related how he went to hear a man of God preach on revival. He was shaken when the preacher began, "We are not here tonight to pray for some big, general revival. We are here to be revived!" In that very hour renewal began in my friend, and he has been used in revival ministries ever since.

The New Testament does not focus on some "great, general revival," not even on revival in the total Body of Christ, as much as this is needed. What appears consistently in the New Testament is an emphasis upon the *local congregation*. The Church began this way in Jerusalem on the Day of Pentecost and then continued to mother other churches after its model.

**The local church is the basic unit for the major working of the Holy Spirit in the New Testament.** There we read of "the church of the Thessalonians" . . . "the church . . . at Corinth" . . . "the churches of Galatia." Finally, in Revelation God clearly sounds out His last word: "He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches." Seven times! There is nothing else like that emphasis in all the Bible. One would think we would wake up and get the message!

Is it not strange, in a day when we fight for the inerrancy of Scripture, how we fail to heed its plainest commands and promises? God has designed holy Scripture so that the main things are the plain things and the plain things are the main things. And no instruction from God is plainer than that which calls individual churches to repentance and renewal.

The problem is with our priorities. We procrastinate and postpone terribly. Secondary concerns crowd out the primary things. We major in minors. Desires get the better of holy disciplines. First things are no longer first. Things become first and use up our time.

Jesus counters all this with one very plain and penetrating word: "Seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you" (Matthew 6:33, NKJ).

When we put first things first (repentance, returning to the "first love" and "first works"), the secondary things which usually attract us take their proper place. Not only are they "added," but they add to the blessing. God works in them also.

**The Necessity of Prayer.** God's call is not only to revival. It is a call to the praying that brings revival to our churches. God works in answer to prayer. This seems hard to learn and easy to forget. God's fire is altar fire. We must again build up the altars of prayer which are broken down. Only the living God can revive us, but He has also made ample provision for the kind of praying that brings revival.

Why is it that churches [pastors] so seldom catch the grand vision of prayer that is on the heart of Jesus and His Church in the New Testament? This at once explains why we do not have more genuine revivals in our churches.

When Jesus built His Church, He built a prayer meeting a praying congregation. This is prime New Testament truth. It is the message written all through the Book of Acts. Yet somehow we miss it. And we miss revival and the powerful working of the Holy Spirit. When the Spirit of prayer departs from our

churches, the glory of the Lord departs with it. The world gets into our churches. And we get into the business of problem-solving instead of life-changing. The ministry of Jesus went deeper than problems. His analysis was not just human and horizontal; it went right to the taproot. He knew what was in man. He changed people and set them on a new course.

I once read a book entitled **Nine Bad Shots in Golf**. To my surprise I found I had all nine of them. But greater still was my surprise when I discovered that one good shot could cure all nine! There are few problems in our churches that prayer meetings cannot solve. One good prayer meeting can cure most of them and bring about the revival we say we need and want.

**My Encounter with Truth.** I was already in the ministry and involved in planting churches before I read through the **Book of Acts**. There I discovered how Jesus planted His Church. That book not only adjusted a few things and solved a few problems, it changed my understanding, my life and my whole ministry. It gave me a new vision of the Church. It changed my prayer life and led me into my first revival and to the call of revival in my ministry.

It is a serious matter, I learned, to pray and pray for revival and not use the means that God has given to bring it about. I also learned and I find this lesson more vital all the time that it is mightily important to make the distinction between praying for a general widespread awakening in the land and a specific local revival in a congregation.

I nearly bounced out of bed one morning when this thought came to me: The only thing our blessed, risen Lord left behind on planet earth when He ascended to heaven was a little prayer meeting! I could not get over it. "Dear Lord," I thought, "I can't believe it! Is that all? Don't You have something else? Some alternate route? What on earth are You going to accomplish with that little meeting, especially in the city of Jerusalem where they crucified You?"

His reply was swift and sharp. "What I am going to do with that little prayer meeting? Just read the Book of Acts and watch! You will quickly see what I am going to do with that little flock. I am going to change the world with that little prayer meeting!"

God continued to speak. "And I am going to teach you what a prayer meeting really is and what I can do with it. Very quickly that praying group is going to become My new church on earth. It will be My greatest wonder in the world, the most powerful force I have ever put together so mighty that even the gates of hell will not prevail against it! It will be My model for all churches and for every revival in churches to the ends of the earth and to the end of the age."

**We Can Do Something.** It all comes down to this: Revival in our churches is as near as our prayer meetings. Not only Scripture but all church history shows that no revival has ever come any other way. This would seem to make it all quite simple but not easy. Right here we need all the encouragement and help we can get.

We must repent and reset priorities. We must quit procrastinating. We must build up the prayer life of our churches in every way the personal prayer life, the praying of prayer partners, the family altars, every kind of group praying and prayer fellowships and meetings of the total assembly.

In this vein, well-planned prayer conferences [seminars\*] throughout our churches can be a mighty help. Just as well-planned missionary conferences have maintained and increased the vision of missions, so also conferences [seminars\*] on prayer can refocus our understanding of the importance of prayer.

Can we possibly improve on Jesus' plan for revival in our churches? John Chrysostom said, "God can refuse nothing to a praying congregation!"

\*Note: From the beginning of our relationship in 1982, Armin encouraged me to persist in the prayer seminar approach based on "A Day in God's Courts" with six hours of teaching/praying time. What can you do to help us continue? Start with your local church/pastor and then move out to other churches/pastors/leaders telling them about the availability of a prayer seminar and challenging them to become praying churches! Then expect Satan to put you on his "hit list."

## DAILY INTERCESSION:

J. Gordon & Sue Henry  
Adam & Dianna Nathanson

## THE PRAYER SEMINAR

[Founded as J. Gordon Henry Ministries in 1984]

### PRAISES AND PRAYERS

O GIVE THANKS TO THE LORD FOR HE IS GOOD (Psalm 136:1)  
How can I praise the Lord enough? He has done so much for me.

**THE EARLY YEARS.** September 1948. JGH came to Christ in a tent revival meeting in **White Pine, Tennessee** six days before 13<sup>th</sup> birthday. There was both intellectual and spiritual growth during grades eight through twelve. Summer 1953. Off to Berea College, Kentucky to begin undergraduate education. Fall 1953. Led in the founding of Westside Baptist Church, Berea, at age 17. Spring 1954. Called as pastor Liberty Avenue Baptist Church, Berea. **First Reflector printed in the fall of 1954.** Sue Troutman, student nurse, became Mrs. Jim Henry in April 1957. Upon graduation with a Bachelor of Arts degree in 1957 joined the faculty of Berea City Schools (later served as principal). Called as pastor, Rosedale Baptist Church, Richmond, Kentucky. Awarded Master of Arts degree in 1966 by Eastern Kentucky University (later returned to teach human development and serve as the Director for Model Laboratory School). Awarded doctor's degree (human development) by the University of Kentucky in 1970. THE EARLY YEARS PROVIDED THE FOUNDATION FOR LIFE AND MINISTRY FOR MOST OF MY EIGHTY-SIX YEARS. GOD CONTINUES TO OPEN DOORS. Prospects for the future of The Prayer Seminar are bright under the leadership of Adam and Dianna Nathanson both at home and abroad.

LET YOUR REQUESTS BE MADE KNOWN UNTO GOD  
(PHILIPPIANS 4:7)

Read the very first appeal letter that launched our prayer seminar outreach in other nations. From the beginning we informed the **Doorkeepers** and asked for prayer and financial need. "Trust God and tell the people" was our modus operandi. We acknowledged our dependence upon the Lord through prayer support asking Him to stir hearts. God heard and answered; needs were met. As explained in February's **Reflector**, a plan has been developed to ensure the future of the prayer seminar ministry in **NIGERIA** under the leadership of **Sunday Bwanhot and Sunday Congo**. Prayer seminars were scheduled for seven major locations in January-February-March. Reports are in for the first two: Gombe, January 16-19. Over one thousand in attendance, 73 new converts and 232 rededicated their lives to Christ. Mangu, January 20-23. Over 400 attended, 36 saved, 122 rededicated. Our part is to provide \$13,000 for 20,000 prayer seminar workbooks (English and Hausa) and a supply of Sunday Bwanhot's Lord, Teach Us to Pray. **Doorkeepers** have given \$8,890 toward this effort. Prayer and financial support is needed for \$4,040. Will you help? Use the enclosed response envelope and specify **"NIGERIA."**

Yours in Calvary love,

J. Gordon Henry

## REFLECTOR

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## "I WILL SEE YOU IN GLORY"



During a visit with faithful **Doorkeepers**, **Mac and June McHaney**, on Thursday, February 17, knowing that **Mac's Coronation Day** was imminent, we talked about death and sang about "Glory." We slipped into the Father's presence in the Throne Room of Heaven, a privilege made possible by the blood of Jesus (**Hebrews 10:19**). Mac's last word to Sue and me was "I will see you in Glory!" In the early hours of Friday, February 18, Mac said to his precious wife, literally "soul-mate" of almost sixty-five years, "I love you." A brief time later, he made his exodus and is now among that "great cloud of witnesses." His presence is now one more reason that I am looking forward to a great reunion day with the large number of **Doorkeepers** who were there to welcome one more!

## IN LOVING MEMORY DOORKEEPERS

Raleigh O. McHaney (Mac)

September 4, 1930 February 18, 2022

Campbell County, Virginia

Note: **June McHaney** was Dr. Henry's close associate during the developmental years of Liberty University and was highly responsible for its success receiving recognition from the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools in record time.

### REMEMBERING

Dr. D. Frank Bell, Sr.

8/29/1932-3/28/2021

Cosby, Tennessee

God's giant in East Tennessee who had a special interest in our work in Cuba.

A leading pastor,

A missionary statesman.



Remember Kenya's Martin & Anne Shikuku  
Director, JGHM: East/Central Africa Branch

## NOTES from My Bible Arminisms

**Note 6016.** We are called to do the work of God, but only God can do it. That's why we pray.

**Note 6017.** We're called to do the impossible, but only God can do it. He's got us again!

**Note 6018.** Just as a hospital needs an E.R.(Emergency Room) a church needs an U. R. (Upper Room).

**Note 6019.** When Christians wake up (revival), non-Christians will also wake up (evangelism).

**Note 6020.** The doorway that leads us into the Upper Room is the command of Christ (see Acts 1:4).

## ROPEHOLDER DOORKEEPER REPORT

"We give thanks to God always for you, making mention of you in our prayers." **1 Thessalonians 1:2**

Regular	34	\$3,643.00
Nigeria	16	1,775.00
TOTAL	50	\$5,418.00