

THE CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC and America's Spiritual Renewal

Dr. Jim Denison April 1, 2020
2 Chronicles 7:13–14

World War II ended seventy-five years ago. In the midst of this horrible conflict, a spiritual war was being waged as well.

The *Wall Street Journal* recently noted that, after World War II, "[Americans, chastened by the horrors of war, turned to faith in search of truth and meaning](#). In the late 1940s, Gallup surveys showed more than three-quarters of Americans were members of a house of worship, compared with about half today. Congress added the words 'under God' to the Pledge of Allegiance in 1954. Some would later call this a Third Great Awakening."

We are fighting a war today against the coronavirus that is just as real as that deadly conflict. Health officials this week painted [a grim picture of what awaits our nation](#) in the coming days.

What can Christians uniquely do to serve our Lord at this critical time?

I believe that this unprecedented crisis presents the most unprecedented opportunity for spiritual awakening in my lifetime. As with World War II, the fact of mortality is more obvious for more of us than ever before. A deadly disease that anyone can get is a deadly disease everyone can get.

Could it be that God would redeem this global medical outbreak by using it to spark a global spiritual outbreak?

Could he be calling his people to the front lines of this spiritual battle?

The global pandemic is sparking global interest in the good news of God's love.

Searching for hope

[Global Media Outreach](#) (GMO) was founded in 2004 by my longtime friend, Walt Wilson. This year, the organization will reach the milestone moment of sharing the gospel with 2 billion people. More than 223 million people have responded positively to GMO's message of faith and hope in Christ, and the ministry's 3,500 online missionaries disciple people with spiritual needs in fifty languages.

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, GMO has gone from reaching 350,000 people per day to upwards of 500,000 globally.

A GMO leader told *The Christian Post*, "[People are coming to us saying, 'I need hope](#). Where can I find hope in the face of tragedy, anxiety, bankruptcy?'" He added, "When people are in pain, we offer encouragement and hope. They're coming to us looking for answers."



I'm praying for God to redeem this pandemic by advancing a spiritual awakening that will bring millions to the hope and answers found in Christ.

Will you join me?

Yet skeptical of Christianity

While much of the world is experiencing an explosion in Christian growth, we are living in a time of unprecedented skepticism in the Western world with regard to historic Christianity.

The Pew Research Center on Religion and Public Life reported in 2019 that [the US "is steadily becoming less Christian and less religiously observant."](#)

Of the adults surveyed, 65 percent described themselves as Christian (down twelve points in a decade), and 26 percent described themselves as atheist, agnostic, or "nothing in particular" (up nine points from 2009). And in the span of a decade, the percentage of Americans who said they attended religious services at least once or twice a month dropped from 52 to 45.

Europe, once the center of Christendom, shows evidence of an even steeper decline.

A Pew study of fifteen Western European countries released in 2018 showed that [most adults still considered themselves Christians, but many of them rarely went to church](#). As an example, there were roughly three times as many (55 percent) of these nonpracticing Christians in the United Kingdom as there were regular churchgoers (18 percent).

Yet Christianity is growing rapidly in the Global South, in places in Africa, Latin America, and Asia. Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary reports that [Africa now has more Christians than any other continent, with 667 million](#), followed by Latin America, with 612 million.

Why are we not seeing a great spiritual movement in Western Europe and North America?

Because we live in a culture that views God as a hobby.

In our society, Christianity is for church, religion for Sunday. Our faith is to be kept separate from the "real world." But everywhere God's people are making God their King, the Lord and Master of every day and every dimension of their lives, a spiritual awakening is coming.

How can it come to our culture?

God's word contains our answer: "When I shut up the heavens so that there is no rain, or command locusts to devour the land or send a plague among my people, if my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then will I hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and will heal their land" (2 Chronicles 7:13–14).

Do we need a spiritual awakening?

A "spiritual awakening" can be defined as a socially transforming spiritual movement.

A "revival" is a spiritual rebirth which transforms a person or a church or even a community into New Testament Christianity.

A "great awakening" transforms a nation.

There have been four such awakenings in American history: in 1734, 1792, 1858, and 1904–05. Each created a movement that changed its culture and altered its history for great spiritual good.

Now a Fifth Great Awakening is coming.

I believe that such a movement is the greatest need of our country these days and that believers should be praying and working toward this purpose in every way we can.

Why does America need a spiritual awakening?

As 2 Chronicles 7 unfolds, Solomon and the people of Israel have just finished their Temple. This is the high-water mark in the history of the Jewish people.

Their borders extend from present-day Syria to the Sinai Peninsula. Their wealth and military might are unequaled in the region. Their king has accumulated 100,000 talents of gold (3,750 tons) and a million talents of silver (37,500 tons; 1 Chronicles 22:14)—a net worth of more than \$58 billion. Solomon is also the wisest man who has ever lived. And now he has just constructed a spectacular house of worship for his nation's God.

But Israel's future prosperity was in no sense guaranteed.

Their Lord warned them that future rebellion would lead to his punishment. In this event, he would "shut up the heavens so that there is no rain, or command locusts to devour the land or send a plague among my people" (2 Chronicles 7:13). In a world dependent on rain for crops, defenseless against ravaging locusts or plague, such events would be totally catastrophic.

As it turned out, their future was in greater peril than they knew. Shortly after Solomon's death, their nation would be divided by civil war. The ten northern tribes would be annihilated and absorbed by Assyria; the two southern tribes would be enslaved by Babylon and then dominated by Persia, Greece, and Rome before their nation was disbanded and destroyed. Their nation would not be constituted again for twenty centuries and today faces hostility from enemies on every side.

But all of this relates to Israel, the Hebrew people. Few reading this essay are Israelis. Why is this warning in the Bible? Is it still relevant to our day and our nation?

As I wrote this, more than 800,000 people around the world had been diagnosed with the coronavirus and almost 40,000 had died. The US had become the epicenter of the pandemic, with almost 175,000 cases and more than 3,000 deaths.

Meanwhile, [stocks were headed for their worst quarter since 2008](#), and [unemployment claims for the week ending March 21, 2020, were a record 3.3 million](#).

I am convinced that God redeems all he allows or causes. We can debate the degree to which God has caused all of this, but we must admit at least that he has allowed it.

For what purpose?

Will you humble yourself before God?

Our text begins: "If my people, who are called by my name. . . ."

All who make Christ their Lord are included. We are "Christians," literally "little Christs," those who are the children of God and own his name. Awakening in the nation starts with us.

How? Our first step is to "humble ourselves," to admit our need of God. We will return to this momentarily.

Once we admit that we need God's help, we "pray." The Hebrew word describes a national plea for repentance.

Then we "seek his face." The Hebrew phrase describes a person returning to God in individual repentance. We see the need of the nation, then we admit the need of our own hearts and souls.

In that light, we "turn from our wicked ways." We decide to turn, to change, to realign with God, to submit to him in all our ways.

When we do these things, God promises to hear from heaven and forgive our sin and heal our land. The spiritual transformation of the culture is the result, a rebirth of nothing less than New Testament Christianity.

So we begin with humility before the Lord.

It is a spiritual fact that God cannot do for us what we try to do for ourselves. If you do not believe that our city and nation need a mighty movement of God, you will miss that movement.

A doctor cannot heal a patient who will not admit an illness. God cannot give what we will not admit we need. If we do not believe that we need more of God than we have, we will not have the God we need.

God will not share his glory. Humility is the indispensable factor in a spiritual movement.

Paul commanded us to "be completely humble and gentle" (Ephesians 4:2). James, the half-brother of Jesus, told us to "humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will lift you up" (James 4:10). A Roman centurion told Jesus, "Lord, I do not deserve to have you come under my roof" (Matthew 8:8), and the Bible says that "his servant was healed at that very hour" (v. 13).

A Gentile woman told Jesus that "even the dogs eat the crumbs that fall from their master's table" (Matthew 15:27), and "her daughter was healed from that very hour" (v. 28).

Paul said of himself: "Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners—of whom I am the worst" (1 Timothy 1:15). And God used him to write half the New Testament and take Christ to the entire Western world.

John the Baptist said of Jesus, "He must increase, but I must decrease" (John 3:30, KJV). And Jesus said of him, "Among those born of women there has not risen anyone greater than John the Baptist" (Matthew 11:11).

Now it's our turn.

We can point people to Jesus, or to ourselves, but we cannot do both.

I cannot convince you at the same time that I am a great writer and that Jesus is a great Savior. The time has come for us to choose: Will we humble ourselves?

Will we seek to glorify God with everything we think and say and do?

Will we be a means to his end, or will he be a means to ours?

I once heard Rick Warren say, "Stop asking God to bless what you are doing and ask him to help you do what he is blessing."

What God Almighty is blessing is a global spiritual awakening, a movement of the Holy Spirit wherever God's people humble themselves, pray, seek his face, and turn from their wicked ways. That is what God is doing in these days.

Here's the question: Will you join him?

Will you admit that your church and community and nation need more of God than you have known?

Do you need to experience the power of God, a transforming spiritual movement?

Will you admit your need of God and humble yourself before him?

Will you seek to glorify him with everything you think and say and do this week?

Will you pray every day for spiritual awakening to come to America, starting with you?

Emerson insisted, "One of our illusions is that the present hour is not the crucial hour."

He was right. We don't have another year or another day to wait. The hour is upon us. We must seek awakening, while there is still time.

Tomorrow is promised to no nation, including ours.

Will you pray for national repentance?

Our text calls us to "humble ourselves and pray." The Hebrew word means to call for national repentance and turning to God. This is our mandate from our Maker for this day.

We must pray every day for a spiritual rebirth and moral awakening in America. We must pray every day for God to use this health and economic crisis to turn Americans from themselves to him. And we must ask for an awakening to begin with us.

A spiritual mystic once said, "There is one thing that must never be forgotten. It is as if a king had sent you to a foreign country with a task to perform. You go and perform many other tasks. But if you fail to perform the task for which you were sent, it will be as if you had done nothing at all."

Will you do what God has sent you to do for your nation?

An elderly father could not decide which of his two children should inherit his mansion, so he devised a test. He gave each of them twenty dollars, instructing them to buy something with which to fill every room in the estate. One bought straw and scattered it as far as it would go, but it did not nearly cover the mansion. The other brought candles, placed one in each room, and filled the entire mansion with light.

Which child are you?

Will you seek God personally?

Our text calls us to humble ourselves, admitting that we need a great movement of God's Spirit. Then we must pray for our nation to turn to God in the face of the great challenges of these days.

Now God calls us to "seek my face." This is the most amazing, exciting, transforming invitation a human being can ever hear. And the most urgent.

The Bible clearly depicts a God who is seeking us. God sought Adam and Eve in the cool of the Garden of Eden. He sought Noah, calling him to build the Ark which would save the human race. He sought Abram in the land we call Iraq today. He sought Jacob on that night they wrestled together, and Joseph in Egypt, and Moses at the burning bush. He sought David after the king had sinned horribly, and the prophets to speak his word to the world.

Then he sought us in the most miraculous, unexpected way of all—he became one of us. He folded the glory and power which created the universe down into a fetus who grew into a baby who breathed our air, walked our dirt, faced our temptations, felt our pain, died on our cross, and rose from our grave. We could not climb up to him, so he climbed down to us.

He sought fishermen beside the Sea of Galilee, tax collectors in their booths and trees, lepers in their abandoned loneliness, and demoniacs in their cemetery hideouts. He was the housekeeper who sought the lost coin, the shepherd who sought the lost sheep, the



father who sought the prodigal son. He sought Peter after his denials and Paul in the midst of his persecutions.

And then the day came when he made you. Your God has given you a heart that pumps enough blood through your body every twenty-four hours to fill a railway tanker. Every day it exerts as much effort as it would take to shovel twenty tons of gravel onto a platform as high as your waist. He has made you of protons, the core of atoms. Look at the dot on an "i" in this sentence. It holds something in the region of 500,000,000,000 protons, more than the number of seconds contained in half a million years. Your Father made all of that, for you.

You live in a visible universe that is now calculated as a million million million million miles across. Through a telescope, you can see around one hundred thousand galaxies, each containing tens of billions of stars. And you're watching all this on a planet that spins at the speed of one thousand miles an hour at its equator. Your Father made all of that, to make a place for you.

And then he made you. His Son died on the cross for you and rose from the grave for you. His Spirit led you to read these words. The God of the universe wants an intimate, passionate, personal relationship with you.

He is seeking you.

Are you seeking God?

The question is, are you seeking him?

A friend recently forwarded me this question: "Is there any logic in believing that God started his Church as a Spirit-filled, loving body with the intention that it would evolve into entertaining, hour-long services? Was he hoping that one day people would be attracted to the Church not because they care for one another, not because they are devoted to him, not because the supernatural occurs in their midst, but because of good music and entertainment?"

The world's religions have always seen worship as a kind of transaction. Make a sacrifice to Athena so she will bless your olive harvest. Practice the four noble truths on the noble eightfold path so you can achieve enlightenment. Declare that there is no God but God and Muhammad is his prophet; pray to Allah five times a day; go to Mecca; fast during Ramadan; give to the poor—all so you will perhaps be accepted by God into his paradise.

Give to get. Transact business. Come to church, pray, read, give, so God will bless you or strengthen your marriage or help your family.

None of that is the biblical invitation.

God says, "Seek my face," not "Seek my favor." Seek to know me, more intimately and passionately than ever before. Love me, for I love you. Want me, for I want you. Know me, for I know you. Seek my face.

"Seek" translates *baqash*, a Hebrew word that means to search out, strive after, ask, beg, beseech, desire, request, require. It describes a passionate search for something of great value.

Such is to be our desire for God:

- "Look to the Lord and his strength; seek his face always" (1 Chronicles 16:11).
- "Devote your heart and soul to seeking the Lord your God" (1 Chronicles 22:19).
- Rehoboam "did evil because he had not set his heart on seeking the LORD" (2 Chronicles 12:14).
- Good king Asa "commanded Judah to seek the LORD, the God of their fathers, and to obey his laws and commands" (2 Chronicles 14:4).
- Scripture says of Hezekiah, "In everything that he undertook in the service of God's temple and in obedience to the law and the commands, he sought his God and worked wholeheartedly. And so he prospered" (2 Chronicles 31:21).
- The Bible says of good king Josiah, "In the eighth year of his reign, while he was still young, he began to seek the God of his father David" (2 Chronicles 34:3).
- David assures us, "The LORD is a refuge for the oppressed, a stronghold in times of trouble. Those who know your name will trust in you, for you, LORD, have never forsaken those who seek you" (Psalm 9:9–10). He later prayed, "may all who seek you rejoice and be glad in you; may those who love your salvation always say, 'The LORD be exalted!'" (40:16).
- Now the prophet exhorts us, "Seek the LORD while he may be found; call on him while he is near" (Isaiah 55:6).
- God told Jeremiah, "You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart" (Jeremiah 29:13), a passage that my wife, Janet, framed for me to put on my desk where I can see it every day of the week.

Seek "my face," the Lord calls to us. "Face" translates *pane*, the countenance or presence. To seek a person's "face" is to seek an intimate, face-to-face encounter with her or him. To seek God's "face" is to seek a closer relationship with him than you have right now.

How do we seek God's face?

Desire to know God more than you know him now. Desire to be in his presence, to experience his Spirit's touch in your spirit, to draw close to him. Make some time to do

this. As with any relationship, it takes an investment of time and energy to build a closer intimacy with God. It is best to do this at the start of every day.

Seek God's face as did the people who came to worship him in the Temple Solomon had just constructed in our text.

As they climbed the steps into the outer courts, they came singing psalms of praise to God. These were called "psalms of ascent" because they were used as the people ascended to Jerusalem and then up the steps to the Temple.

In the same way, we enter the gates of the Lord with thanksgiving and his courts with praise (Psalm 100:4). Sing or say a psalm, a hymn, a chorus. Praise and thank your Father for all he has done for you. Remember his last blessing and give thanks for it. Come to him in worship.

Now continue in sacrifice.

The Jews brought the sacrifices for their sins to the priests, where they were laid on the altar. Jesus' death is the final sacrifice, the "Lamb slain from the foundation of the world" (Revelation 13:8). Bring him your sins and mistakes, anything that would separate you from your Lord. Ask the Spirit to show you anything that displeases your holy God and confess it to your Savior. Claim his promise to forgive your sins and cleanse you from all unrighteousness (1 John 1:9).

Now you are ready to bring your offerings to the Lord.

The people brought offerings from the harvest and from all the blessings of God. In the same way, we are to present our bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God as our spiritual worship (Romans 12:1). Submit and surrender your plans, dreams, agendas, and problems. Yield them all to him, asking him to fill you with his Spirit and use you for his glory. Ask God to make his presence real to you, to fill you with his peace and joy. And they will be yours.

God wants you to know him more than you want to know him. You must now decide: Do you want to know God intimately and personally? Do you want awakening to come to your heart and life?

An old saying from the Far East reminds us: "No man can carry two melons in his hand." There is room for only one on the throne of your heart and life.

Thomas Kelly, the Quaker educator and author, wrote: "Over the margins of life comes a whisper, a faint call, a premonition of richer living which we know we are passing by. Strained by the very mad pace of our daily outer burdens, we are further strained by an inward uneasiness, because we have hints that there is a way of life vastly richer and deeper than all this hurried existence, a life of unhurried serenity and peace and power."

Is it yours?

Will it be yours?



Will you turn from your wicked ways?

If we would experience a true spiritual awakening, we must humble ourselves and admit that we need God's power and purpose. We must pray for the nation and seek God's face personally. Then we must align our lives with his call.

The last phrase of our key text makes the point clearly: God's people must "turn from their wicked ways." "Ways" translates a Hebrew word for road, path, journey, mode of action, course of life. It pictures the normal ways we live, places we travel, our lifestyles. "Wicked" translates a Hebrew word for superlative evil, that which is exceedingly wrong.

Does America need to repent of her "wicked ways"?

My parents remembered a time when moral standards were unambiguous and social expectations were clear. But that day is no more.

Forty-two percent of those who use the Internet view pornography on it. Ninety percent of our children, ages eight to sixteen, have viewed pornography on the internet, most while doing their homework. Sixty-five percent of Americans see nothing wrong with premarital sex. Drunk drivers kill someone every thirty minutes in this country.

Why has the moral climate of America changed so much in recent decades?

Here's the academic answer, in brief.

The Reformation shook the foundations of medieval Catholic authority. In response, a mathematician named Rene Descartes (1596–1650), in a desire to argue for objective truth and his Catholic tradition, developed a theory that truth comes through the unaided use of the mind. Philosophers in England countered that truth is known through the senses.

A German thinker named Immanuel Kant (1724–1804) combined the two views, arguing that knowledge is produced when our minds interpret our sense data. However, Kant asserted, we cannot know the "thing in itself," only our experience of it. Knowledge is personal and subjective.

Two centuries later, this approach to truth has become the dominant academic view in our country. Ethics are personal and subjective. You have no right to force "your truth" on anyone else. So long as we are sincere in our beliefs and tolerant of others, we'll get along. The result is a culture that has lost its moral foundations.

Few Christians would claim that America's moral climate is pleasing to God. But note that his word focuses on "my people, called by my name."

We are the first who must "turn from their wicked ways." Not radical Muslim terrorists, or serial killers, or drug dealers. God is pointing to the things you and I do each and every day, the ways we live. God says that our ways are "wicked," evil in the extreme.

Do you think of your sins as "wicked"?

You probably haven't committed adultery or murder this week. I doubt that you mean to harm other people. Neither do I. But the white lies, the sinful thoughts, the little things we know we shouldn't do—all of them are called "wicked" by God.

If we humble ourselves, pray, and seek his face, we will see ourselves in the light of his holiness. Then we will see our sins the way he sees them.

That's what happened to Isaiah when he saw the Lord high and lifted up—he cried out, "Woe to me! I am ruined! For I am a man of unclean lips, and I live among a people of unclean lips, and my eyes have seen the King, the Lord Almighty" (Isaiah 6:5).

That's what happened to Peter when he saw the miraculous power of Jesus—he said, "Go away from me, Lord; I am a sinful man!" (Luke 5:8).

That's what happened to John on Patmos when he saw the glorified Jesus—he fell at his feet as though dead (Revelation 1:17).

When we see our sins as God sees them, the way to get off of the wrong road is to stop now. The farther we go, the farther we'll have to go back. Decide you want to go the right way, "turn from your wicked ways," and go there.

How? Begin with a "spiritual inventory":

1. Make some time to be alone with God.
2. Ask the Holy Spirit to show you anything in your life that displeases the Father.
3. Write down what comes to your mind, specifically and honestly.
4. Confess your sins individually, with repentance and contrition.
5. Claim God's promise to forgive your sins and cleanse you from all unrighteousness (1 John 1:9).

Do this regularly.

Know that God is ready to forgive every sin you'll confess, but that he can heal your land only if he first heals his own people.

America's repentance begins with yours.

Gypsy Smith, a great evangelist of an earlier generation, was asked how revival begins. His response: "Take a piece of chalk and draw a circle around yourself. Get on your knees and pray until everything in that circle is right with God, and revival will be upon us."

Will you take his advice today?

Will you pray for awakening?

God calls his people to humble ourselves, admitting that we need a great movement of the Holy Spirit; to pray for our nation to turn to God; to seek his face with personal intimacy; and to turn from our sins and failures. If we do, his promise is clear: "Then will I hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and will heal their land."

God has honored his promise every time his people have fulfilled its conditions.

The First Great Awakening began in 1734.

The crisis in the colonies was severe. Moral conditions were dire. Not one in twenty people claimed to be a Christian. Samuel Blair, a pastor of the day, said that religion lay as it were dying and ready to expire its last breath of life.

But Theodore Frelinghuysen, a Dutch Reformed minister who had come to the colonies from Holland in 1720, would not give up on his adopted homeland. He began praying fervently for revival to come to the colonies, first with himself and his church, and then with his larger community. Others began joining his fledgling prayer movement. The Spirit began to move.

Then Jonathan Edwards, an intellectual recluse who studied twelve hours a day and read his sermons, face buried in the manuscript, experienced the anointing and power of God. His sermon, "Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God," shook his church and then the young nation.

The preaching of George Whitefield gathered and galvanized thousands. The First Great Awakening was the result. As much as 80 percent of the colonial population became identified with a Christian church.

It started with a group who prayed for the power of God to extend the kingdom of God in their Jerusalem and around the world.

The Second Great Awakening began in 1792.

After the War for Independence, social conditions grew even more deplorable than before. Drunkenness became epidemic; out of a population of five million, 300,000 were confirmed alcoholics; 15,000 died of the disease each year. Women were afraid to go out at night for fear of assault. Bank robberies were a daily occurrence.

John Marshall, Chief Justice of the United States, wrote to James Madison, Bishop of Virginia, that the Church "was too far gone ever to be redeemed." A poll taken at Harvard University found not a single believer. Two were found at Princeton. Tom Paine claimed that "Christianity will be forgotten in 30 years."

But he was mistaken.

In 1784, a Baptist pastor named Isaac Baccus gathered a number of ministers. They wrote a circular letter, asking believers to pray for awakening. Prayer groups spread all over New England. In 1792, revival broke out on college campuses, where hundreds were



converted. "Camp meetings" spread across the frontier; eventually, more than a thousand were meeting annually. Churches doubled and tripled in membership. One Baptist church in Kentucky with a membership of 170 baptized 421 during a single revival meeting.

In that year, William Carey began the modern missions movement. The American Bible Society, American Tract Society, and a variety of missions organizations began as a result of this awakening.

All because a group prayed for the power of God to extend the kingdom of God in their Jerusalem and around the world.

The Third Great Awakening is dated to 1858.

The Gold Rush of 1848 had led to a booming economy that crashed in 1857. If it were not for the Great Depression of the 1930s, the collapse of 1857 would have that title. Fear of civil war was increasing. Turmoil was everywhere.

In the midst of such fear and anxiety, a group of laymen began meeting for prayer on Wednesday, September 23, 1857, at the Old North Dutch Church in New York City. They were led by a Presbyterian businessman named Jeremiah Lamphier. The first day, six people came to his prayer meeting. The next week there were fourteen; then twenty-three; then the group began to meet daily. They outgrew the church and began filling other churches and meeting halls throughout the city. Such meetings spread across the country.

The result was one of the most significant movements in Christian history.

More than a million were saved in one year, out of a national population of only thirty million. Fifty thousand were coming to Christ every week. The revival continued into the Civil War, where more than one hundred thousand soldiers were converted. Sailors took the revival to other countries. Thousands of young people volunteered for mission service.

It all happened because a group prayed for the power of God to extend the kingdom of God in their Jerusalem and around the world.

The Fourth Great Awakening began in Wales in 1904.

This awakening started in the heart of a coal miner named Evan Roberts. He was convicted of his sins by the Spirit and turned to God in prayer and repentance. He then began preaching to the young people in his church, calling them to prayer and repentance.

Prayer meetings broke out all over Wales. Social conditions were affected dramatically. Tavern owners went bankrupt; police formed gospel quartets because they had no one to arrest. Coal mines shut down for a time because the miners stopped using profanity and the mules no longer understood them.

The revival spread to America, where ministers in Atlantic City, NJ, reported that out of fifty thousand people, only fifty adults were left unconverted. In Portland, Oregon, more than two hundred stores closed daily from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. so people could attend prayer

meetings. In 1896, only two thousand students were engaged in missionary studies; by 1906, eleven thousand were enrolled.

All because a group prayed for the power of God to extend the kingdom of God in their Jerusalem and around the world.

Now there is a Fifth Great Awakening on the move around the world.

Will it come to America?

No question is more urgent for our nation in these critical days.

Will you join me in praying fervently for a Fifth Great Awakening in America today?