

Meet the Latin American Pastors Who Paid the Price for Revival

What is the price of revival? What price did Martin Luther pay? What did William Seymour pay? What about Evan Roberts? What price did the Wesleys pay? What about George Whitfield, Charles Spurgeon, Billy Sunday? What price did the Voice of Healing evangelists pay? What about Kathryn Kuhlman?

We get a few glimpses into the prayer lives—and the intimacy with the Holy Spirit—of some so-called generals of the faith, but we'll never really know the cost until we set out to pay it in our own lives.

Pastors Ricardo and Patricia Rodríguez, who co-lead Central Mundial de Avivamiento in Bogotá, Colombia, have paid the price to see their warehouse megachurch move from visitation to a true habitation of the Lord that attracts 40,000 hungry believers on Sunday alone.

Ricardo will tell you that the Holy Spirit comes freely, but to maintain a dwelling place for God, you have to give Him the preeminence. That translates largely to time. John Wesley, a key figure in America's first Great Awakening, rose every morning at 4 a.m. to seek God for the first four hours of his day. He was known to spend as many as eight hours a day in prayer.

"Ricardo has paid a big price," Patricia told me. "He denies himself everything and gives first place to the Lord. He spends hours every day in the presence of God, praying, reading, singing, crying, jumping and joyful. As a matter of fact, if he doesn't have as much time to spend with the Lord as he would like, he becomes unhappy. There is such a tight relationship, a friendship with the Lord."

Everyone I speak to—from John and Carol Arnott, generals from the Toronto Blessing, to Dutch Sheets, the founder of the Appeal to Heaven movement, to Bill Johnson, senior pastor at Bethel Church in Redding, California—tells me pursuing personal revival is about pursuing a true friendship with God, so that His thoughts become your thoughts.

“Many people hang up pictures on the wall that say, ‘The Holy Spirit is my friend,’ but those are just words to them,” Patricia says. “For Ricardo, that friendship is a reality. Wherever the Lord takes him, we go together, and each place we go, you feel the atmosphere become warm before he steps on the platform. He never goes on the platform by himself. The Holy Spirit always goes with him.” And signs and wonders follow.

This friendship with God is available to “whosoever will.” But there is a price. Kuhlman once put it this way: “It cost everything. If you really want to know the price, if you really want to know the price, I’ll tell you. It’d cost you everything.” {eoa}