

Our World on Fire

If we truly want to see the Holy Spirit transform our communities, here's how we can prepare ourselves for His coming. Only God can transform a community, but there are several things we can do to prepare for His arrival. Here's a short list of considerations.

1. Picture true success. In short, a transformed community is a neighborhood, city or nation where values and institutions have been overrun by the grace and presence of God; a place where divine fire has not merely been summoned, it has fallen; a society in which natural evolutionary change has been disrupted by invasive supernatural power; a culture that has been impacted comprehensively and undeniably by the kingdom of God; a location where kingdom values are celebrated publicly and passed on to future generations.

2. Discern your condition. Obscured Jeopardy Syndrome is a condition that prevails in communities where serious illnesses are not readily discernible. The primary symptom is a false sense of security, and the only remedy is to ask God to help us see things as they *really* are. This revelation helps us avoid superficial assessments based on how circumstances are affecting us personally, as well as what prior experience has taught us is normal.

3. Work up an appetite. We all possess a long list of life hungers. Some are *base appetites*—food, sex, sleep—essential to our survival as a species. Others are unique to us as individuals. These might include a hunger for reputation or security. The salient question is: Where on this list do we rank our hunger for the presence of God? The process of transforming revival is triggered when our appetite for God's presence trumps all other hungers.

4. Find faithful companions. It is important to pray with

others who share both our desperation for God and a genuine spirit of unity. In looking for these qualities, we do well to remember that God's choicest servants often come in unconventional packages. In addition to pastors and intercessors, our initial core might very well consist of tax collectors, shepherds or even children.

5. Touch the real thing. Got memories? One thing can be said of genuine revival: It changes you. And there is no better way to stoke faith than to visit a community where God's transforming touch is on exhibit. In the words of one Hebridean saint, "Once you have tasted revival, you always want to see it again."

6. Pray with focus. It goes without saying that prayer is the incubator and furnace of revival. If it is neglected or dies out, all forward progress will cease. For this reason, and because today's wealth of information often leads to a poverty of attention, mastering our digital life and calendar is essential.

7. Get on the clock. Last, if we are to realize transforming revival, we must migrate from wishful hoping to biblical expectancy. This means temporarily shutting down aspects of "normal life" to prepare for something extraordinary. And just as the actions of elite athletes are motivated by, and measured against, the looming prospect of the next Olympiad, having a time frame is key (see Prov. 13:4, Hosea 6:3).