

21 Days of Consecration

America's greatest need is spiritual revival. The United States has seen an awakening in every century of its existence—except this one.

In the 18th century, the First Great Awakening swept thousands of colonists into the kingdom of God, and the courage to break free from Great Britain germinated in the soil of awakened hearts.

The 19th century witnessed the Second Great Awakening, which shook the American frontier with dramatic results. Entire denominations doubled their memberships in just years.

In the 20th century, the Pentecostal-charismatic movement had a global impact. During the last 100 years, nations of the world have been touched, and more than 640 million people now claim to be Spirit-filled.

America's history has been informed consistently by significant spiritual renewal. However, we are now one-tenth of the way through the 21st century and, as far as we know, the U.S. has yet to experience a fresh awakening.

The ineffectiveness of the American church pushes us to ask some hard questions of God and ourselves:

Have we allowed ourselves to be preoccupied with political, social and peripheral issues more than with the nation's greatest need? Have we spent billions fighting political and social battles while losing the spiritual battle for the souls of a new generation? Have we chosen the easier way of carnal weaponry while neglecting God's more challenging way of spiritual intensity?

Have we picketed more than prayed, fought more than fasted and lashed out more than loved? Have we been duped into hoping

that righteousness would be installed from the top down rather than recognizing that true awakening comes from the bottom up?

Does the church in America need to experience a fresh grace through repentance? Do we need a deep cleansing and renewal?

I believe that the answer to these questions is a painful and convicting yes.

Today's church is desperate for a deep and transformational revival that will change the spiritual landscape of our country again.

The question is, what would an awakening in 21st century America look like? What would happen if God shook this nation during the next decade? How would we know if revival and awakening were occurring?

Fasting from a pure heart with proper motives will help lead us into the brokenness required to receive God's next move in our nation. Fasting brings spiritual benefits because it helps us humble ourselves, presses us toward personal cleansing, focuses our hearts and weans us off earthly distractions.

It allows for heightened sensitivity to God's voice and positions us to bring deliverance to the captives. Fasting and prayer facilitate a personal renewal of our connection and intimacy with Jesus. His presence and pleasure become our reward.

Ultimately, the renewal of the church and of the nation will depend on people who respond to His call. True spiritual awakening in this century will be a grass-roots movement in which intimacy with Jesus is restored one heart at a time, producing the fruitfulness and freshness we all desire.

Why not let the 21st century awakening start in your church. More importantly, why not let it start in your heart?

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