

4 Ingredients in the Recipe for Revival

Not being able to use the oven as an 8-year-old, I became quite skilled at cooking meals for myself in the microwave oven. Nearly every morning I would make a full breakfast complete with scrambled eggs, bacon and grits buttered to southern perfection. My mom was amused by her little chef and let me enjoy my little space of independence—even if it meant a little extra work for her cleaning up my messes.

One day I found a recipe for microwaved chocolate cake. For this preteen kid I might as well have discovered gold. I was incredibly anxious to try this one afternoon after school. I could already taste the sweet warm soft cake in my mouth with a tall glass of milk. When I arrived home that day I dropped my bags and headed straight for the kitchen and began rummaging through the cupboards looking for the ingredients.

The recipe called for cocoa powder (sweetened). We only had unsweetened but I figured cocoa is cocoa so what difference does it make? Next I needed baking powder. To this day I'm not sure I can tell the difference between a box of baking soda and baking powder. They look the same, so I put a little baking soda in. I couldn't reach the sugar, but salt looks a lot like sugar and it was conveniently sitting on the table.

I mixed everything up, with the rest of the ingredients and popped it into the microwave, punched in 10 minutes and went to pour my milk as I waited for my fresh cake to come straight out of the (microwave) oven.

You can imagine my expectation quickly became disappointment as I put in my spoon and took a big bite. It was awful! It tasted like a mouthful of dirt. That afternoon I learned a valuable lesson—*change the recipe, change the outcome!*

Thirty years later I hunger for something different. Not for a natural meal that can be prepared in an earthly kitchen, but for a supernatural move than only comes from the fires of a heavenly altar in answer to fervent prayers. Our nation is in desperate need of such a move. No doubt, the days have grown dark and continue to grow darker. The only hope we have is found in revival!

Thankfully God has provided us a recipe for revival within his word. Like a family recipe passed down from generation to generation it is a favorite passage of scripture that is often quoted in times prayer. But I wonder... is it possible we are guilty of changing that recipe and thus changing the outcome? Are we trying to rush what requires time and patience? Are we substituting our ideas for his proven ingredients?

The late revivalist, Leonard Ravenhill said often, "We will live without revival, as long as we are content to remain without it."

I see a divine discontent coming back to the body of Christ and hear fresh calls for revival. If we want to see God's results then we must return to God's ways. To truly experience revival, we must look to the pattern the Lord gave us in 2 Chronicles 7:14 and throw the following on to the fires of his altar.

1) A Humble Heart

"If My people who are called by My name will humble themselves..."

True humility is found when we come to the end of ourselves. This is the poverty of the spirit that Jesus said opens up the kingdom of God in Matthew 5:3. If we want revival, we have to humble ourselves and understand that there is nothing that we have or can do within our "self" that has any value. True humility is returning to the Lord as our only hope and source. It means absolute dependence upon God.

True revival will not be found in a powerful program, a better building or the next innovative idea. The answer is and always has been him. The sooner we recognize that fact the better.

When I hear of churches practicing their services multiple times before the first attendee walks through the doors, I grieve. We have turned his house of prayer into a hall of performance. We are guilty of being too much into our heads, it's time to let the Lord speak to our hearts. Perhaps it's time for a zealous prophet to come overturn some tables and call us back to our origins.

Our nation will not be transformed by a great church, but by a glorious church who relies on a great God! It's time to humble ourselves and return to him.

2) Persistent Prayer.

“...and pray...”

Do you believe in the power of prayer? Have you experienced that wonderful miracle of answered prayer? Then why is it that you pray so little?

No man can ever be greater than his own prayer life. A saint who can kneel in prayer will never struggle to stand in public.

If we understand that prayer changes things, that it moves mountains and pulls down strongholds, why don't we pray more? Why is it the last place we run to instead of the first?

I know the excuses. I've used them for years. “I am too busy.” “There is just isn't enough time.” “I'll do it tomorrow.”

My friend, if you are too busy, then you are too busy to not pray. Why not attack your day from the prayer closet, instead of letting the attack of your day drive you to the prayer closet?

Revival comes in answer to the effective, fervent prayers of faith filled men and women. This means revival is not found in a place, but a position. That position is on our knees in prayer. If you want to see revival birthed in your nation, church or family, let it first be birthed in you. Go to God in prayer and don't stop until revival has touched your spirit.

3) Holy Hunger

“...and seek my face,”

When revival first touched my life it came after I yielded to the deep drawing of his spirit. I was a backslidden, apathetic, lukewarm church kid who knew a lot about God but didn't really know him. That all changed one afternoon while sitting in the last pew of a church. After fighting through an altar call for 45 minutes, resisting the conviction of the Holy Ghost, I finally surrendered and yielded to His wooing.

It was 100 feet from the back to the altar, those steps were the first steps of a journey that I've now been on for 20 years. I found Him that day, and I have pursued Him everyday since.

Jesus said those who hunger and thirst for righteousness shall be filled. Are you still hungry? Do you still thirst for more of Him? If so, it's time to abandon every other pursuit and concentrate on chasing after the one thing that truly matters.

4) Radical Repentance

“...and turn from their own wicked ways.”

It's interesting how often I've heard 2 Chronicles 7:14 quoted in prayer meetings and gatherings with great attention payed to humbling ourselves, praying and seeking, with little to no emphasis placed on repentance. This is the most diminished portion of this scripture, yet it is just as important as the

rest.

It's unimaginable but some churches forbid mentioning repentance in services let alone calling people towards it. Others have attempted to change the meaning of repentance in an attempt to lessen its offense. It's been challenged as a legalistic work that has no place in the life of the believer. The saint is told that New Testament repentance is simply a change in your thinking.

Remember, if you change the recipe, you change the outcome. Without repentance, revival is impossible! This damnable doctrine from hell that would cheapen grace and remove the wonder of repentance keeps true revival from ever touching our land.

Repentance is not a work of the flesh; it is a work of grace. By His grace we are convicted of unrighteousness and by His grace we are enabled to repent. I am so thankful that those whom the Lord loves He chastens!

Every morning I pray, "Lord, search me, know my heart. See if there be any wicked way in me and bring it into your light that I might repent before You!" Everyday He is making me more and more like Him. I have learned that the working is His, while the yielding is mine!

I told you that I learned a valuable lesson at the age of eight: Change the recipe, you change the outcome. It's time for us get back to the basics. Back to the original recipe. In humility, let us return to a position of prayer, seeking the face of God and turning from our own wicked ways.

2 Chronicles 7:14 tells us that once we've thrown these ingredients onto the fires of his altar, "then He will hear from heaven, forgive our sins and heal our land."

Revival is already stirring in the churches across our nation as his people return to him in humility, prayer, hunger and

repentance. I believe a national awakening is beginning to dawn. God is hearing from heaven.

Regardless of where you are in your spiritual journey at this moment, I encourage you to go back to God's recipe and I have no doubt you'll see His results. Not because He is obligated to send revival because we follow His word, but because He has promised to do so if and when we do.

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