

EXCLUSIVE: Why Next Week Could Launch a Spiritual Movement

Next week marks the National Day of Prayer. Christians around the country will unite under Ephesians 4:3. Ronnie Floyd, the president of the National Day of Prayer Task Force, addressed how the May 3 event could trigger genuine revival across America.

For decades, you've been calling the church in America to pray for revival. Why are you so passionate about this?

God has used great movements of God to shape our nation. Therefore, I believe revival is and has always been America's greatest hope. In fact, if you look at our country's history, revival in one form or another has paved the way forward during some of our darkest days. The first great awakening set the stage for the Revolutionary War. The second came before the Civil War. The Jesus Movement of the late '60s and early '70s brought hope to millions of Americans during the darkest days of the Vietnam war. Revival is ingrained in America's DNA.

Above all, revival in the church and spiritual awakening occurs regionally and nationally, when we seek God with all of our hearts and cry to him with one voice. It's a holy moment of surrender when we recognize our sin and our need for God's intervention in our lives and our nation. When that happens, our lives, families, churches, communities and our country change.

Why do you believe this particular National Day of Prayer is important?

We are living through one of the most troubling times in our

country's recent history. Division abounds in nearly every sphere of American society. Hate is evident, racial tensions are high and political vitriol fills our days. In the midst of all this, we are also confronting serious social issues—like gun violence, the epidemic of sexual harassment, challenges to religious liberty, racial unrest and many others—that are testing the foundations of our republic.

Scripture, in 2 Chronicles 7:14 says, “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 I will hear from heaven, and I will forgive their sin and will heal their land.”

I cannot think of another moment when America has needed to hear these words more. We must call on the Lord and acknowledge that we need Him to heal us. That's the great hope for America today.

This year's National Day of Prayer theme is “Pray for America, Unity.” Do you think prayer is powerful enough to bridge the deep divides in America today?

One of the key things we need to understand about prayer is that it's as much about us crying to God for His grace as it is about God calling us to His truth. In other words, when we pray, God is also requesting something of us. As C.S. Lewis once famously said, prayer “doesn't change God. It changes me.”

Today in America, we need God's supernatural intervention to bridge some divides we could never on our own. We also need God to awaken our spirits to His truth and change our hearts so we can take the necessary steps we can toward unity. We are not just asking God to do a miracle in our country; we are asking Him to use us to bring unity to America.

I believe there is no great movement of God that has ever occurred that does not first begin without the extraordinary

prayer of God's people. Prayer is never inaction. It is our greatest action. When we pray, we depend on God. When we do not pray, we are depending on ourselves. Now is the time for us to pray and see the power of God change our country and us individually.

You've said before that government cannot fix us, and politics will not heal us. What is America's hope to overcome the crisis we are in?

We need to recognize that America's real problem is not really political, social or even racial: it's a heart problem. More specifically, it's a problem of lack of forgiveness and disunity in our hearts. It's the No. 1 obstacle to the next great move of God in your life, your church and our nation. Nothing has built a taller, deeper, and thicker wall in the hearts of people and in the churches of our land.

Our hope alone is in Jesus. "For He is our peace, who has made us both groups one and has broken down the barrier of the dividing wall," says Ephesians 2:14. We need God to awaken our hearts to this truth, which is powerful enough to bring down any barrier and bridge the distance we've placed between one another.

What do you hope Thursday, May 3 will look like?

On last year's National Day of Prayer, over 2 million people gathered and prayed for America in 30,000 events across all 50 states. In 2018, we are expecting a great movement of God, when millions will call out to him in one voice. We want the National Day of Prayer to spark a spiritual movement in the hearts of individuals and churches in America—the kind of spiritual movement that will shape the present and future of America.

What specific things should we pray for?

Our core petition for America this May 3 is unity. We are

asking God to empower us to make every effort, as Ephesians 4:3 says, to live in unity, call for unity and model unity in our country. This includes praying specifically for unity in the church. Unity in America begins with a united church that fervently prays and believes that God can bring the next great spiritual awakening to our country.

You can read the five prayer points for the National Day of Prayer [here](#).

What will revival look like?

Revival in America will come in many ways and look differently for many people, but the most evident way it will come to America will be in unity. Genuine revival brings people together. Spiritual revival transcends all denominational, cultural, racial and ethnic lines.

It breaks down the barriers we've built between one another. A revival in America today will see healing coming between families, forgiveness between opposing groups, and a unified sense of purpose in our country.

How is the church changing right now? What will it look like in a few years?

There's a lot of talk about how America is becoming a more secular nation and how younger generations are leaving the church. But what I have found is that the churches who remain committed to scriptural truth and the gospel are able to withstand the winds of culture and social change. I believe America—especially young people—is thirsty for the truth of the gospel. And as long as believers are standing united as one, calling people to Jesus, there will be a strong church in America.

How can we carry out the theme beyond the single day?

While we are certainly calling millions of Americans to join

us on Thursday, May 3, for a day of fervent prayer to God, we want it to be much more than a one-day event. We want it to become a true spiritual movement. A movement that not just prays for unity, but forwards and advances unity in America. Unity is supernatural and we must call upon God to experience it continually.

The truth is unity takes time. In most cases, it's not an overnight change. We have to learn to forgive, to be humble and to serve one another. Each one of us has both the responsibility and the opportunity to forward unity in our relationships, spheres of influence and daily lives. It's a step by step process, the first step always being prayer.

What has the Holy Spirit told you about this movement?

The Holy Spirit always leads us to the Lord Jesus Christ and the Word of God, the Bible. He never works outside of what His Word says. Therefore, I believe any great movement of God will look like what God has done in past years as recorded through the Bible. We need God to shape present day America and future America in the same way He has used awakenings to shape our past history.

Prayer is rapidly being banned in the public square. What sort of spiritual warfare is driving this?

The first thing we need to understand is that this isn't as much a rejection of prayer as a rejection of God. Some people sadly want to remove any vestige of Christianity from our schools and public spaces, when in fact the Christian faith has always been at the heart of our nation's history. Still, Scripture says that our battle is not against physical forces but the forces of evil (Eph. 6:12). While we must certainly defend, advocate and fight for religious freedom, we must remember our greatest weapon against these forces is prayer. There has never been a greater time where prayer is needed again in the public square including in the schools and public

spaces of America.

What sort of miracles have you seen come to pass because of prayer?

In 1990, my wife was diagnosed with cancer. She was 35 years of age, and we had two very young sons. I prayed and fasted one day a week for at least one year, asking God to heal my wife. My wife was healed and is still free from cancer today. I have seen God do all kinds of miraculous things in my life due to prayer and fasting. In 1995, I saw God bring a mighty spiritual revival to my church that still impacts our missional advancement to this day.

God can do anything, anytime, anywhere with anyone. God can do more in a moment than I can do in a lifetime. This is why I believe God can transform the United States of America. {eo}

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