

It's Your Awakening: How Revival Depends on You

God's shown up during powerful spiritual awakenings in America's past centuries. Many believe without another such awakening, the country could slide into a long, dark decline. But Christians who want a national revival have to realize they have a part to play first.

Christian leaders and authors who've been speaking and writing about a possible Third Great Awakening say it can't happen till believers one by one get desperate, get praying and get their own hearts revived first.

Charisma Magazine Senior Editor Jennifer LeClaire writes about all this in her book, *The Next Great Move of God*.

"Will we use our faith? Will we pray? What will we do? I believe God is watching and I think the decisions we are making in this period are just vital," LeClaire told CBN News.

It's not something she just writes about, but actively pursues. She joins with a number of other Christians eager for revival in a Pompano Beach, Florida, prayer room several times a week.

Time to Get Desperate

LeClaire said she's certain God wants to move, but says, "We know that He's waiting on His people who are called by His name to humble themselves, repent, turn from their wicked ways."

Eddie Hyatt, a historian and pastor, has written about what it takes to ignite a Third Great Awakening in his book, *America's Revival Heritage*.

"This is a very critical time and God's people in America need

to fall on their knees, fall on their face and cry out to God,” Hyatt stated.

Popular preacher Dutch Sheets travels to all 50 states and told CBN News he finds these desperate believers everywhere he goes.

“There’s nowhere I go where I don’t find a core of believers that are passionate, serious, desperate, understanding our true condition,” he said. “You have to be blind not to know that America’s in real trouble. But they are going after this thing in prayer. And that’s where it always starts.”

LeClaire agreed, saying, “When you want to see a nation transformed, it does, it starts with us. So we ask the Lord, ‘Show us Your glory, show us Your power. Lord, if there’s something in us that is in Your way, help us to get it out of Your way. We want to go full-on for You. We want to make an impact in our generation for You. We want to do this for You. Help us.’ God loves those prayers.”

Invasion from Heaven

Hyatt added, “We don’t need a religious meeting that’s been worked up from below. We need an invasion from heaven where God comes down and heaven invades earth. And God comes down and touches people’s lives.”

In his book, *An Appeal to Heaven*, Sheets talks in-depth about God prodding him over the last two decades to pursue a Third Great Awakening. While depravity is obviously rising in the nation, Sheets said as he prays for revival, he’s come to a certainty sin won’t stop God from moving.

“I’m not asking based on our merits. I’m asking based on the fact that God loves to save,” he said. “While evil increases, so does the grace of God. And there can be both happening at the same time.”

Hyatt has studied how Colonial-era Christians, like Preacher Jonathan Edwards, were moved mightily by the Holy Spirit to pray long and hard for revival before the First Great Awakening swept over the colonies in the mid-1700s.

Hyatt quoted Edwards, saying, “‘When God purposes to do a thing in the earth, He first sets His people praying for the very thing that He intends to do.’”

“Give Me New England or Let Me Die”

And Edwards himself was the perfect example.

“I read that before he presented his message, ‘Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God,’ he had been praying for 18 hours,” Hyatt said. “And he’d been crying out to God, ‘God, give me New England or let me die.’”

But Hyatt and Sheets pointed out that America, before and during its birth, was much more aware that God is real and active.

The nation went into the Revolutionary War flying a flag that said “Appeal to Heaven,” a phrase popular political philosopher John Locke used.

“What Locke said was ‘When there is no other way, there’s nothing you can do humanly speaking, you still can appeal to heaven,’” Sheets explained. “And George Washington grabbed this, put it on a flag.”

It was a nation in which even a doubter in organized religion like Ben Franklin stood up during the deadlocked Constitutional Convention of 1787 and declared the need to humbly ask God to move.

Hyatt describes the moment in his latest book, *The Faith and Vision of Benjamin Franklin*.

“He stands up and exhorts them and calls them to prayer,” Hyatt said of Franklin challenging the delegates. “And he quotes from Scripture.”

Sheets picked up the story from there, describing what Franklin said. “‘Look, I’ve been around a long time. And if there’s one thing I’ve learned it’s that there’s a God in heaven who rules over the affairs of men and nations. And if a sparrow can’t fall to the ground without Him knowing about it, how can a nation be born without God being a part of it? And I suggest we call upon Him.’”

Hyatt said, “According to those who were present, there was a spirit of reconciliation that seemed to come upon the gathering. They went back together and they hammered out the American Constitution.”

God Can Do It Again

All three authors believe it’s important for Christians to recall and retell such stories so all realize the God who powerfully moved in earlier awakenings can do it again now.

“When we testify to what God has done in the past, it not only builds our faith, but I believe it causes Him to move on that again,” LeClaire explained. “We’re putting Him in remembrance of what He did. We’re giving Him glory. And it shows that we have faith that He can do it again.”

Hyatt said, “At particular times in this nation’s history when it’s faced great crises, God has preserved this nation by visiting us with great spiritual awakenings.”

And LeClaire said every Christian can be a catalyst to keep this great American story going.

“Begin by looking around and seeing where God would have you,” she advised. “He’ll show you if you’ll pray. Inserting yourself in the story gives you ownership of it. It causes you

to grab hold and be determined to do your part to see this Awakening come full bore.”

Hyatt’s hopeful because he sees God moving.

“He is now stirring His people and putting that desire in their hearts for the very thing that He intends to do,” he said.

Don’t Cripple Your Own Awakening

But LeClaire insisted every concerned believer must first throw off the sins and entanglements that cripple their own awakening.

“What are you thinking about the most? What are you talking about the most?” she asked. “How do you spend your time? How do you spend your money? Are you sitting in front of the TV for 140 hours a month like the rest of America, according to one study?”

“Are you in your church?” she continued. “Are you evangelizing? Are you making an impact in your sphere of influence? What’s most important to you? If God doesn’t fit somewhere in those questions and answers, then you need revival.”

LeClaire read CBN News a prayer featured in her book, *The Next Great Move of God*, and written by Voice of Destiny radio host Larry Sparks.

She quoted, “‘Holy Spirit, come. I want to experience Your Presence and power like never before. I don’t want just a touch or a visitation or a season of revival. I want to live like Jesus said I could live. Open my eyes. Show me areas in my church, my life and my family that need to be transformed.’”

LeClaire also pointed out it’s important for Christians not to inadvertently derail a national revival by criticizing it to

death.

“Every move of God looks different, so this next great move of God that’s emerging even now is going to look different than the charismatic movement or the Jesus movement,” LeClaire explained.

“We need to discern, but we also need to not attack and criticize and judge,” she continued. “We need to all just be very in tune with the Holy Spirit. And if we stay in tune with Him, we’ll recognize it when it’s really Him.”

LeClaire encouraged believers not to sit on the sidelines, waiting for and hoping there will be a Third Great Awakening, but to remember a core truth: Revival begins with you.