

Prayer Movement as Precursor of Revival

The Feast of Pentecost is recognized to be the birth date of the church. The Holy Spirit appeared among believers in a show of force never seen before, with the sound of a mighty rushing wind, with tongues of fire and with new tongues recognized by Jerusalem pilgrims from all over the known world. Within a short time, the Gospel of Jesus Christ was spread through the Roman world, spurred by the Holy Spirit's urging and accompanied by signs and wonders.

We long for the same holy fire of the Holy Spirit to be poured out again in our time. After all, this is a promise that God made through Prophet Joel regarding the coming Day of the Lord:

"And it will be that, afterwards, I will pour out My Spirit on all flesh; then your sons and your daughters will prophesy, your old men will dream dreams, and your young men will see visions. Even on the menservants and maidservants in those days I will pour out My Spirit. Then I will work wonders in the heavens and the earth—blood and fire and columns of smoke. The sun will be turned to darkness, and the moon to blood, before the great and awe-inspiring day of the Lord comes" (Joel 2: 28 – 31, MEV).

While the first part of the prophecy has been fulfilled, as recognized by the Council of Jerusalem in Acts 15, the rest of the passage has not come to pass and would be realized as we draw closer to the coming Day of the Lord in the end time. While we are familiar with what happened during the time of the apostles after Pentecost, it is important to recall what took place before the outpouring of the Holy Spirit.

The disciples received a strict instruction from Jesus to not

leave Jerusalem until they received power from God to be witnesses to the world. After giving said instruction, Jesus ascended to heaven, which made the already-difficult task even more problematic. After all, the disciples were hiding in fear from religious authorities a few weeks ago. It was clear from the start that they did not have what it would take to fulfill the task so they obeyed the instruction to the letter and waited.

The disciples were not idle in their waiting period either. The Bible described their activities as such:

“These all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication, with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with His brothers” (Acts 1: 14).

The disciples knew that the only way they could fulfill Jesus’ final charge was to wait for the promised power but they refused to wait idly. Instead, these 120 disciples did a continuous prayer rally, which culminated in the Holy Spirit’s arrival. In fact, the Holy Spirit came as a response to the disciples’ desperate prayer as much as a fulfillment to a promise.

In the past few hundred years, the church of Jesus has been split into many denominations, each with its own distinct style and nuance in ways of worship, discipleship and service. However, the power of prayer should remain an essential value that all disciples of Christ should share. In fact, in the days where the body of Christ appears to be divided over theological lines, prayer should be the one principle that can unite the church.

Past revivals did not occur randomly without reason. Throughout history, the Holy Spirit has always moved in response to hearts that are hungry for Him, acting with one accord in prayer and supplication. Are we hungry for revival in our city, in our nation or in our community? Is there

greater need in the world right now that is worthy of the attention of the global united church? Are we going to be the generation that will witness the fulfillment of the promise of Joel 2? {eoa}

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