

We're About to See Revival 500 Years in the Making

This year we will mark the 500-year anniversary of a date that forever altered the course of world history. It was Oct. 17, 1517 when a priest named Martin Luther came to the doors of the Castle Church at Wittenberg, Germany with a hammer and nail in one hand and a controversial document in the other. He came that night hoping to initiate a debate; he ended up igniting a reformation.

Luther had spent years striving to earn his salvation through rigid adherence to religious rites and rituals. Yet for all his efforts, he remained uncertain of his own righteousness before God. He turned to Scripture, looking for the answer to the questions that vexed his soul. As he read through the New Testament, he came to Romans 1:17, "For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, 'The just shall live by faith.'" This truth set Luther free.

Suddenly he realized that no amount of human effort could purchase salvation. The forgiveness of sins was not in the power of the church or the pope. It was found in simple faith in Jesus Christ alone. With this revelation in mind, he began to pen several thoughts and opinions that addressed the excesses and abuses he saw within the church. There were 95 in all. Luther now had a decision to make. Should he remain silent and continue to fall in line with an apostate church, or would he challenge the status quo? Resisting his own human nature to settle for what was comfortable, he chose the latter.

When Luther came that night to nail this declaration to the front door of the church, he could not imagine the consequences of his decision. These bold questions sent him

into exile from the Catholic church and was ultimately labeled a heretic. However, his conviction and courage were contagious. The Lord used this simple act to begin a great reformation within the church. Today, every church and every one of us one billion Protestants alive right now can trace our roots back to that fateful night. One man willing to challenge the status-quo literally changed the world.

I tell you that story because it is important for each of us to remain connected to our past as we contend for our future. This is why I wrote *Trail of Fire*. It wasn't just to tell the stories of what God did, but to inspire individuals to break free from the dull, dry routines of religion and become a catalyst for revival. We need to reconnect with the stories of the great men and women of God who have preceded us—those faithful saints who now surround us in the great cloud of witnesses paid a price to pass this faith on to us. Now they watch as we continue to run the race they have already finished. Let us honor them by running it with all perseverance.

Luther is just one of those witnesses. His story reminds us that one person can truly make a big difference if they are bold enough to stand. I still believe simple, bold faith can change the world. Further, I am inspired by the lives of such great men and women of God who chose to fall out of line and did something different. It makes me ask, *How am I challenging the status quo, resisting the comfortable and contending to make a difference?*

Last year, Jenna and I felt the Lord lead us to our own "Wittenberg moment." We chose to nail our own personal declaration to the door of the church and set out to do our part to contend for a greater reformation in this nation.

What did we do?

It was July. I was sitting in my home office reflecting on 20

years of ministry. My friend, I've been humbled and honored to be a part of some great things. International crusades, national conferences, television broadcasts, magazines articles, two published books, a successful church plant, the establishment of a ministry training school and countless souls reached with the gospel. These are all good things that we label as success in the church world. Yet, for all we've seen and accomplished, I was discontent.

I thought through the lives of the saints that inspire me. Pioneers like Jim Elliot who left everything to reach the unreached tribes of Ecuador. Circuit riders like Francis Asbury or John Wesley who covered great distances on horseback to preach the gospel and plant churches in the western frontier. Revivalists like Charles Finney or Maria Woodworth-Etter, who even in their senior years were still contending to see cities shaken for the kingdom of God. As I sat there in my office, I wrestled with the idea of my family and me walking away from everything to take a bold step of faith into the unknown, or to remain content with where we were.

I could hear the words of Leonard Ravenhill and Steve Hill resounding in my spirit, "The comfortable never contend!" Could it be true? Had I grown content? Had I stopped contending? Was I simply doing good things for the Lord, missing out on the great things I could do with the Lord?

The answer was yes.

I thought further about the possibility of my children growing up in a nation and time absent of true revival. Sure, we have been a part of a good church. However, I long for more than just good services with good music and good programs. I want them to know what it is to come into a sanctuary and be overwhelmed by the glory of God, not caught up in an emotional atmosphere. I want them to see multitudes of souls being delivered at the altar, not simply convinced to pray along with the preacher. I want them to see something other than the

“American church.” I want them to see what it looks like when a city, not just a congregation, experiences a move of God.

So we did the extreme. At the end of 2016, we abandoned the “American Dream.” We sold our beautiful 3,000-square-foot home in the suburbs of Dallas along with all our furniture and vehicles to move our family into a 300-square-foot motor home. We chose to take 2017 and embark on a one-year sojourn across the nation to see what God is doing in the land. No, we are not getting into the current fad of simple living and tiny homes, though we certainly are living simply. We are traveling the U.S., state by state, one week at a time to do two things.

First, we are visiting some of the old sites of historic moves of God to tell the stories of these great moves from the location from which they took place. We hope to re-dig these ancient wells and rebuild the old sacred altars in an effort to remind and reignite the fires from which our nation was born.

Second, we are connecting churches, ministries, revival hubs and houses of prayer that are truly contending for revival and awakening in their region to one another. We don’t want to just tell the story of what God did, we want to shout and celebrate what God is doing across the land.

Over the next year, I hope to share many of these stories with you right here. I pray that it encourages you to challenge your own status quo and contend for God to move in your life, family and community. I believe there are many Martin Luthers whom God is awakening this year to break out from their religious routines and see the kingdom of God come to their hometown. Prophetically, I see a remnant beginning to rise from their seats in the sanctuary, tacking their own personal declarations to the door as they set out to contend for a greater awakening in this land.

I believe there is a great opportunity before us this year.

You can follow our journey here and on our website at [. Also](#), you can help us along the way. If you know of a ministry we should spotlight or an old forgotten story of a past move of God in your state or area—I want to hear about it. Comment below or contact us. Let's take this journey together.

In *Trail of Fire* I shared 10 stories from 10 past moves of God, this year I hope to share dozens of current stories about present moves of God. Perhaps together we can blaze a trail of fire across this nation and see one last great awakening come to our land. It's been 500 years since the last great Reformation, why not see one again?

Hope to see you on the trail. {eoa}

*A true son of revival, **Daniel Norris**, is an evangelist, revivalist and author. Following in the footsteps of his mentor Steve Hill, Daniel travels nationally and internationally preaching a message of revival and repentance. In 2017, he and his family are traveling across America, state by state, week by week to tell the stories of what God has done and is doing. They can be reached at [, or on Facebook, Twitter or Instagram @danielknorris.](#)*