

Where Are All the Old-School Intercessors?

You know the story of **revivalist** Charles Finney. He was an attorney-turned-preacher in the early 1800s, declaring he received “a retainer from the Lord Jesus Christ to plead His cause.”

During his preaching days in New York, several **revivals** broke out and spread like wildfire. Finney was one of the first to allow women to pray in public. He was passionate about **evangelism**, had a mind for social reform and goes down in history as a catalyst for the Second **Great Awakening**.

You know Finney, but do you know Finney’s intercessors? Fr. Daniel Nash and Abel Clary were old-school **intercessors**—intercessors who rose up long before the Pentecostal church was born—whom many credit with laying the foundation of the Finney-inspired **revivals**.

Although Finney’s name is recorded in **Christian history**, fewer know anything about the dedication of Nash and Clary. Thankfully, we can still learn plenty from these mighty men of God if we dig deep enough into their prayer lives. We can learn what it means to be a true **intercessor**—and we can learn to value the gift of **intercession** and the people who walk in an anointing to pray without ceasing and bring heaven to earth.

Daring Daniel Nash

Christ for All Nations evangelist Daniel Kolenda penned an article about Nash, explaining how Nash would precede Finney’s arrival in a city for **revival** meetings. He was known to stay in his room for days at a time, interceding. Weeping and groaning could be heard coming from his room. Kolenda reports that Nash would not quit until he felt that the spiritual atmosphere had been prepared for Finney’s arrival.

“The greatest moves of God in American history occurred during

this season of time,” Kolenda writes. “Entire regions were changed as a result of Finney’s ministry. Historians point to those meetings as having such a profound impact upon people and societies that the effects could still be seen a century or more later! The powerful preaching of **Charles Finney** that saw hundreds of thousands of people saved would have never had the impact it did had it not been for the spiritual partnership with the intercessory ministry of Daniel Nash. It is interesting to note that only four months after Daniel Nash’s death, Charles Finney left the itinerate **revival** ministry to pastor a church. The powerful **revivals** that characterized his ministry and changed a nation began to wane.”

Able Abel Clary

Abel Clary was just as able with **intercession**. Clary traveled with Finney everywhere Finney went. Finney himself wrote of Clary, “Mr. Clary continued as long as I did, and he did not leave until after I had left. He never appeared in public, but he gave himself wholly to **prayer**.”

“[Clary] had been licensed to preach; but his **spirit of prayer** was such, he was so burdened with the souls of men, that he was not able to preach much, his whole time and strength being given to **prayer**,” Finney wrote. “The burden of his soul would frequently be so great that he was unable to stand, and he would writhe in agony. I was well acquainted with him, and knew something of the wonderful spirit of prayer that rested upon him. He was a very silent man, as almost all are who have that powerful **spirit of prayer**.”

As history tells it, Finney found Clary’s prayer journal after Clary went on to glory. Recorded within its pages were the chronicles of the **prayer burdens** the Lord put on his heart. It’s no accident or coincidence that those prayer burdens aligned, one by one, with the order of the blessings poured out on Finney’s ministry and the people who came to his meetings.

Calling All Intercessors

It’s rare that I meet these types of **intercessors** today—ones

who lay down their lives for another. I know they exist, but based on the state of the church, the nation and the world, I discern a dearth of old-school intercessors like Nash and Clary in the modern age. For if there were more like Nash and Clary, I am convinced there would be more revivals, more salvations—even another Great Awakening.

I recently met two old-school intercessors who have blessed my life tremendously in the short time I've known them. Michelle Smith and Linda Willoughby—and Linda's crew at Keepers of the Flame International—have connected their hearts to mine and have prayed, prayed and prayed some more. I've never had consistent **intercession** over my life and ministry, and I can tell you that it makes all the difference.

The Lord has enlarged my territory by an order of magnitude in just the few months since they started praying. IHOP Fort Lauderdale has grown from four hours of **prayer** a week to 24 hours of prayer seven days a week literally overnight. Sure, the Lord was laying the groundwork for years before they started **praying**, but I believe their prayers brought us to a tipping point that will change the spiritual climate of the city of Fort Lauderdale.

So, where are all the old-school intercessors? Are you one of them? Is God tugging on your heart to intercede for **revival**, to stand in the gap for your nation, to pray for your pastor? Intercession is a labor of love—God's love. I am calling for Spirit-empowered intercessors to rise up in this hour and take their posts. Churches, ministries, people and nations need your prayers. Amen.

Jennifer LeClaire is news editor at Charisma. She is also the author of several books, including *The Spiritual Warrior's Guide to Defeating Jezebel* and *The Making of a Prophet*. You can email Jennifer at [@](mailto:jleclaire@charisma.com) or visit her website at www.jenniferleclaire.com.