

FIRESTARTERS 5

PRAYER TOOL

Igniting Prayer for Revival in our City • 5 Minutes to Read • 5 Minutes in Prayer

FOR THE WEEK OF June 21-27, 2020 - Vol 8

THEME VERSE:

*The Lord is near to all who call on Him,
to all who call on Him in truth.*

Psalm 145:18

THE GOD OF REVIVAL:

The 1967 Jesus Movement

In the 1960's and 1970's the United States saw a remarkable revival that produced individuals and communities that were sold-out for Christ and impacted every nook and cranny of American culture. This revival was called the Jesus Movement, and unlike most other revivals, it can't be traced back to just one individual or church.

Looking back, the 1960's in the United States was an extremely turbulent time. It was the era of the Cuban missile crisis, numerous violent race riots in major cities, and the assassinations of President John F. Kennedy and Martin Luther King Jr. The Supreme Court also abolished Bible reading and prayer from the public schools, and through all this, the rising counter-cultural movement of the time surged nationwide and swept up the country's youth. They became immersed in the hippie culture: young people who were angry, rebellious, dropping out of the established system, and turned on to drugs. Not seeing the power of God lived out in real life, this new generation of youth quickly abandoned the traditional forms of church and turned to hedonism and Eastern religions. Churches were rapidly shrinking in attendance and viewed as irrelevant. But many believers began praying for God to recapture the lost hearts of these youth. And once again, God would step in to revive a generation...

It began in 1967 with a handful of youth on the West Coast who were burnt out on the hippie lifestyle and who had recently put their faith in Christ. They met frequently in a Christian coffeehouse in San Francisco called The Living Room, where they would hang out, listen to music, and have piercingly honest conversations about Jesus. Communal living was a key value of the hippie culture, and these young disciples were drawn to living more like the early church. So the House of Acts was formed to provide a vehicle to care for them and to foster fellowship and real-life discipleship. These early hippie converts were called Jesus People, or even ridiculed as Jesus Freaks, because of their radical love for and identification with Him. They wore that badge proudly. And amazingly, through this coffeehouse and many other ministries later set up across the nation, hundreds and even thousands of hippies gave up their drugs and sexual immorality and occult practices. They turned to and embraced Jesus as their Savior. It was a return to a simple life that was all about Jesus. Their joy was tangible, exuberantly expressed in loving Him, drinking in His Word, and sharing Him with everyone they could find.

By the early 1970's, the moving of the Holy Spirit, coupled with the passion and resolve of the Jesus Freaks, would spread and capture the imaginations of young people across the nation, permeating music and movies and culture and all kinds of churches. One of the movement's slogans was "One Way!", accompanied by a handsign of an index finger pointing upwards, declaring that Jesus alone was the way to Heaven. The believers were marked by a deep hunger for more of God and an authentic relationship with Jesus. In 1972, more than 80,000 students gathered at the Cotton Bowl stadium in Dallas, Texas, for Explo '72. It is considered by many as the most visible public event of the Jesus Movement. At one point, they doused the arena in darkness before a candle was passed around that ignited candles all throughout the stadium to bathe the

vast sea of darkness in cascading light. Thousands rededicated their lives to God, committed themselves to full-time service, and caught a vision that their life truly mattered to their Creator. God had sparked a revolution to revive this generation!

THE GOD WHO ANSWERS PRAYERS:

- Praise God that the unemployment figures have gone down to under 13% currently despite predictions it would rise to above 20%.
- Thank God for answered prayer that local businesses are hiring again. From Amazon, food delivery services to grocery stores and other retailers, many companies are employing new workers.

PRAYER REQUESTS THIS WEEK:

FOR THE NEEDS OF OUR CITY:

- Pray for the divides that we are seeing manifested racially, politically, theologically and generationally. May the Lord give us divine wisdom on how to bridge these gaps and be the unified Body we are called to be.
- Pray for the Lord's hand of protection as the number of positive cases and hospitalizations and deaths in Mecklenburg are somewhat elevated from 3 weeks ago. Having flattened the curve, now we need to diligently care for those infected. Continue to pray for complete healing for all who are sick and for a quick resolution to end the pandemic here and worldwide.

FOR PROTECTING AND VALUING LIFE:

- Pray for the abortionists at the local Latrobe clinic. Pray that they would turn to the Lord and walk away from their careers of taking the lives of innocent babies.
- Pray for a young lady named Laura in Florida to stay firm in her decision to choose life for her pre-born child.

FOR MISSIONS AND NEEDS GLOBALLY:

- Pray for the 643 language groups in Africa - representing 25 million people - that one day soon each would have a Bible translation initiated in their group.
- Pray for the Quechua people in Peru: there is good news of revival in various areas. There have been some restrictions placed on Christians meeting together but God is moving regardless!

FOR THE LOCAL CHURCHES AND REVIVAL:

- Pray for pastors and churches making difficult decisions about when and how to regather after the closing due to the pandemic. This process is proving to be very difficult in some churches. Pray for the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace through this process (Ephesians 4:1-6), and for wisdom to make the right decisions at the right time.
- Pray for revival to come as we focus afresh on the Great Commandment – loving God with all of me and loving our neighbors – especially during this time of racial tension and the need for understanding and reconciliation. Pray for a readiness to listen and love those who are different from us so that Christ might be honored in that loving, and so that our empathetic witness can powerfully impact the community around us. Revive us with supernatural love, O God!

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