

FIRESTARTERS 5

PRAYER TOOL

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

FOR THE WEEK OF Dec 5th - Dec 11th, 2021 - **Volume 84**

THEME VERSE:

*And he told them a parable to the effect that
they ought always to pray and not lose heart...
And will not God give justice to his elect,
who cry to him day and night? Will he delay long over them?*

Luke 18:1,7

THE GOD OF REVIVAL:

The Revivals of the Carolinas: Early Sparks in the 1800's

Even though the First Great Awakening peaked by the 1770's, the Methodist circuit riders carried the flames of revival forward and into the most remote settlements for many years afterwards. Evangelists from other denominations, led by the Spirit, also preached revival in the new communities. These leaders' faithfulness would provide a vital connection to God's next powerful move as the Second Great Awakening was stirred up in the early 1800's.

North Carolina would be the hometown and training ground for the revivalist James McGready. McGready was born in Pennsylvania in 1763, but his family moved early on to Guilford County, in the north-central portion of North Carolina. Growing up in a Presbyterian church, young McGready demonstrated great earnestness to grow closer to his Savior. He later was formally educated in Pennsylvania during the 1780's, and he was deeply impacted by revival preachers who taught on unwavering personal holiness and deep commitment to God.

In 1793, he was assigned to minister at the Stony Creek and Haw River churches in North Carolina. He preached fierce messages against sin and promoted purity in the lives of believers. This sometimes led to violent reactions, and one day a troublemaker burned his pulpit and threatened bodily harm to him if he continued. By 1796, McGready was inundated by feelings of failure in the midst of spurts of revival. But God next opened up for him an opportunity to go to the wild and lawless frontier town in Logan County, Kentucky.

McGready firmly believed that prevailing prayer was the key to unlocking revival. So, before he left the Carolinas, he shored up commitments from many North Carolina churches to pray persistently and relentlessly that God would bring revival to Kentucky. Once he established a small congregation in Logan County, he impressed upon the local members also the urgency to personally commit to prayer for a mighty move of God to come.

In June of 1800, under McGready's leadership, the first flames of a new awakening ignited among those gathered for worship at Red River, bringing repentance, re-commitments, and many new salvations. Notably, people often were overcome by the Spirit so greatly that they demonstrated intense emotions and sometimes unusual physical reactions. Soon, other camp meetings sprung up and attracted thousands upon thousands of hungry or curious listeners, who inevitably encountered God and experienced His presence. The well-known Cane Ridge camp revival broke out in late 1801 and saw the Spirit of God poured out on tens of thousands of people. It was the threshold event that burgeoned into the 2nd Great Awakening in America.

This new awakening would spread out to many other states in the coming years. In retrospect, although the major catalyst event that launched this mighty revival took place in Cane Ridge, Kentucky, there is no doubt that North Carolina played an essential role. She was the place of spiritual nurture and the training ground for the key revivalist McGready, and the Carolina churches laid the foundations for the future awakening through their unflinching commitment to passionately pray for a fresh Spirit outpouring.

THE GOD WHO ANSWERS PRAYERS:

Praise God for projects like Operation Christmas Child, sponsored by Samaritan's Purse. It allows, even during times of COVID concern, for gift packages carrying the Gospel to be sent to needy children in the hardest-to-reach places on earth. This year, they will be packing nearly 3 million boxes for children at a Charlotte facility. Thank God for every occasion that the Church embraces to be light in the darkness.

PRAYER REQUESTS THIS WEEK:

FOR THE CITY:

- **SHOOTINGS IN SCHOOLS.** North Carolina has seen numerous shootings on school grounds this past year. It has taken place in areas like Wilmington and Winston-Salem. Sadly, this trend of violent behavior is happening nationwide, as witnessed by the tragedy at Oxford high school in Michigan, where at least 6 were injured and 3 killed. Pray for comfort for all the families affected, and that God will bring healing to survivors and other student bystanders. Pray for the shooter's mind and soul, that he would encounter justice and mercy. Pray for God to help us identify and fix the roots of the trend of violent shooters in our nation.
- **SURGING INFLATION.** Please pray for individuals and families who are facing a severe crunch as inflation rages out of control. Pray for God's provision and care for each of them. Pray that churches across our city provide generous assistance during this time. Pray that leaders and processes will conform to Godly wisdom so that inflation can be capped and managed well.

FOR THE WORLD AND MISSIONS:

- **AFRICA.** Pray for thousands of Africans to accept Jesus through the *Christ for all Nations* crusades. God is moving in powerful ways as thousands are hearing the Gospel and being healed and delivered.
- **THE God Loves You TOUR.** Pray for the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association as they get ready for the four-city *God Loves You* Tour next year in Great Britain and also in the USA. Pray for many in attendance to turn to the Lord and for a great move of the Holy Spirit to be unleashed.

FOR REVIVAL:

- **PERSISTENT PRAYER.** Father God, as we enter a time of celebrating the birth of Christ, would You fill us again with a renewed sense of anticipation? Help us to give thanks for the incredible gift of Jesus Christ and to look forward to the astounding ways you will revive and restore Your people as well as win the lost. Teach us to pray like Jesus did: with eyes fixed upon You, longing for the Kingdom, and attentively dependent upon the Spirit. Show us how to press in and contend for the things on Your heart. Capture our hearts to one day see revival flowing powerfully in our midst again.

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