

FIRE FROM HEAVEN

God's Provision for Personal Spiritual Victory

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The Bible Teacher's Teacher

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Appendix A

BUYING FROM JESUS CHRIST

REVELATION 3:14–22 AND ISAIAH 55

This study focuses upon how we buy from the Lord Jesus Christ these things that are of such priceless value to bring to us what we greatly need. The best explanation of how believers buy from God appears in Isaiah 55.

I. BUY THROUGH PERSISTENT PRAYER (VV. 1–2B)

1. Come to quench your spiritual thirst (1a).
2. Come to the “waters” (1b; illustration: woman at the well).
3. Come without any funds to buy, “you who have no money” (1c).
4. Come for the real food you need; “buy and eat” (1d).
5. Come for joyful refreshment; “come, buy wine” (1e).
6. Come for beginning nourishment; “buy ... milk” (1f).
7. Come for the bread that satisfies; “what is not bread” (2a): gambling, pleasure, drugs, alcohol, leaving the Lord out of your life, self-centered interests, sensual pursuits; “what [labor that] does not satisfy” (2b): materialism, popularity, position, stuff, power, clothes, recognition, feelings, etc.

II. BUY THROUGH LISTENING PRAYER (VV. 2C–3A)

1. Listening to God through His Word gives you “good” food (2c).
2. Listening to God through His Word gives you “soul” food (2d).
3. Listening to God through His Word gives you living food (3a).

III. BUY THROUGH CHRIST-CENTERED PRAYER (VV. 3B–5C): “SEE ... HIM” (V. 4A)

1. Christ is the “everlasting covenant” (3b).
2. Christ is God’s “faithful love” (3c).
3. Christ is the “witness to the people” (4a).
4. Christ is the “leader and commander of the people” (4b).
5. Christ “summons nations” (5a).
6. Christ is the one the nations will obey (5b).
7. Christ is the one that “God, the Holy One of Israel” will endow with glorious splendor (5c).

IV. BUY THROUGH REPENTANT PRAYER (VV. 6–7)

1. Repentance is a diligent seeking of the Lord (6a).
2. Repentance is an intense “call” to the nearness of the Lord (6b).

3. Repentance is forsaking our wicked ways (7a).
4. Repentance is renouncing our evil thoughts (7b).
5. Repentance is turning to the Lord for mercy (7c).
6. Repentance is turning to the Lord for pardon (7d).

V. BUY THROUGH WORSHIP-CENTERED PRAYER (VV. 8–11)

1. Worship the Lord in His transcendent greatness (8–9).
2. Worship the Lord for His faithful, daily provisions (10).
3. Worship the Lord for the sure, faithful promises of His Word (11).

God promises that the conclusion of this kind of faithful “buying” from Him will bring the deepest levels of spiritual renewal with all of its abundance of blessings:

- Renewal means “joy” (12a).
- Renewal brings “peace” (12b).
- Renewal makes all of creation rejoice (12c).
- Renewal removes hurtful problems and replaces them with His blessings (13a).
- Renewal produces renown and everlasting blessings to God (13b).



Appendix B

THE FIVE COMMANDMENTS THAT CONVICT US ALL

This is the essence of the approach that Jake Malenke describes in which he presents five of the Ten Commandments in his prison ministry evangelization work. As described in chapter 2, many Christian-convert prisoners likewise used it to win their fellow inmates to Christ.

How good would you have to be to go to heaven by your good deeds? “Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect” (Matt. 5:48).

Ask yourself, “Am I good enough to go to heaven?”

Looking at five of the Ten Commandments we will see if we are good enough to get to heaven:

“You shall not take the name of God in vain.” Have you ever used God’s name as a curse word? If you have, you’ve taken the holy name of God—who gave you your life, your family, and everything precious to you—and used it as a filthy, four-letter word; you are a blasphemer. “The LORD will not hold anyone guiltless who misuses his name” (Ex. 20:7).

“You shall not lie.” If you have told even one lie, that makes you a liar. The Bible warns that all liars will have their part in the lake of fire (Rev. 21:8). You may not think that deceitfulness is a serious sin, but God does.

“You shall not steal.” Have you ever stolen anything (even if it was something small)? The value of the stolen item doesn’t matter; petty theft is still theft. First Corinthians 6:10 says that thieves will have no share in the kingdom of God.

“You shall not commit adultery.” Jesus warned, “I tell you that anyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart” (Matt. 5:28). Have you ever looked at another person with lust? The Bible says that adulterers and fornicators will not enter the kingdom of heaven.

“You shall not murder.” Christ said in 1 John 3:15, “Anyone who hates his brother is a murderer.” God sees hatred in the heart to be as wicked as murder. We violate His law by attitude and intent.

If God on judgment day judged you on your answers, would you be guilty or innocent? Does that concern you? Do you think you would go to heaven or hell? If I could show you how you could go to heaven and have your sins forgiven, would that be of interest to you? Galatians 3:24: “So the law was put in charge to lead us to Christ that we might be justified by faith.”



Appendix C

ROMANIA AND SPIRITUAL REVIVAL

ROMANIA'S OVERTHROW OF COMMUNISM

Communism was an experiment conducted in a laboratory large enough to include nearly 40 percent of humanity. It was an experiment in a new type of government, a new type of society, a new type of economy, and a new type of attitude toward religion. By 1989, with the fall of the Berlin Wall and the impending collapse of the communist party in the Soviet Union, communism had been shown to be a failed experiment, rejected by people hungry for freedom. But during most of 1980s, leaders still called it a system that would produce heaven on earth without God.

In Romania, as elsewhere, devout Christians knew it could not succeed. As Reverend Ton says, “Whenever you try something without God, you go with Satan. Satan always lands in hell. The end of the experiment proved to be hell on earth.”

As the communist regimes of Eastern Europe toppled like dominoes, Romanians across the world groaned and questioned: “Why are we the last ones? Why no movement in Romania? Why are the Romanians so cowardly? Why don’t they show courage like the other nations?”

Ton confides, “We started to feel embarrassed and ashamed that we were Romanians.” It is not pleasant to realize your country might remain an island of repression and suffering because of inaction among its people.

Ton explains the reasons behind the delay with words of insight: “Nobody knew at the time how evil was the evil in Romania! In Romania the communist dictator developed a system of secret police so evil, so satanic, so merciless, so cruel that nobody could conceive it. No one knew ... until the population exploded. It was then that people learned of how mercilessly the secret police were willing to slaughter anyone and everyone. The cruelties, the carnage and the crimes of these tyrants showed why the Romanians didn’t move before.”

Much about Ceausescu’s ruling tactics hints of “satanic evil”: his brutal repression of the Christian faith, his desire to build self-exalting monuments of achievement, and his cruel repression of all dissent. As we shall see, the Romanian church endured satanically inspired persecution, repression, and hate.

NOT A REVOLUTION—A MIRACLE

Secular people called it a revolution, but believers described the Romanian surge toward independence differently. Ton calls the overthrow a “beautiful uprising.” Doina Cornea, a retired teacher and a famous television personality in Romania, pointed this out on national television. She protested the uprising being called revolution. “Don’t call it revolution!” she said. “Call it God’s miracle in Romania, because it was all God’s doing!”

The miracle began on December 15, 1989, in the city of Timisoara around the house of Rev. Laslo Tokes, a Reformed Church pastor. The police arrived to evict him from his house and his pastorate because of his bold stand for Jesus Christ. About two hundred of his parishioners, however, learned about the approaching police and came to defend him and to prevent the eviction; they surrounded

his residence. These bold Christians intimidated the authorities to the point that they retreated to gain reinforcements.

On Saturday more people came, many from different churches. They were protesting the intrusion of the communist government into the ministry of the local church. Saturday evening, a young man from the First Baptist Church of Timisoara brought candles and handed them out to the hundreds of people now surrounding the house. He lit the first candle, and the people all lit theirs from those previously lit. A blaze of lighted candles flickered in the night. That moment seemed to trigger the uprising.

As the people sang hymns and held their lit candles, the secret police opened fire, wounding or killing many of those courageous Christians. The young man who brought the candles was shot in the leg, an injury so severe that his leg had to be amputated. When his pastor visited him in the hospital the young man said, "I lost a leg, but I lit the first light."

For three or four days these Christian people kept returning to the pastor's home even though automatic weapons were raised and the police occasionally fired, injuring more protesters. The people faced the threat of brutal carnage unafraid. "Freedom! Freedom! We don't mind that we die!" they kept shouting.

At that point Romanian people began to realize that freedom was more precious than living. Dying was preferred to slavery. The Romanian police state was doomed. Nobody could stop the will of a spiritually aroused, freedom-loving people.

The leaders invited several pastors to those public places where huge crowds of protesters began to assemble. The gatherings became worship and praise meetings toward God, where crowds of almost one hundred thousand people knelt on the pavement in reverent worship, repeating the Lord's Prayer together. They listened as the pastors led in the corporate expressions of prayer, praise, and petition.[†]

Pastor Ton reported one vivid scene in Timisoara. A girl from the Pentecostal church appeared on a balcony where a large gathering of people had assembled. She recited a beautiful poem: We are not creatures made by chance / We are not monkeys / We are God's creatures / God exists!

After each stanza those two words, "God exists," were repeated. The words were picked up by the multitude and became the slogan of the uprising. The cry, "God exists! God is with us!" was heard everywhere in Romania.

A well-known Romanian hymn became the song of the uprising:

We live at the end of the age;
An age of darkness, hate and war;
But soon Jesus comes back to us;
Jesus comes back to us.

A GOD-CENTERED UPRISING

Everything about the uprising was God-centered. Most of the Romanian people, when interviewed about the revolution, declared, "God did it!" They saw God's hand everywhere. In fact, the Romanian weather is usually bitterly cold in December, but during the week of the uprising the temperatures were very warm, ranging from 60 to 70 degrees. The people were able to stay day and night in the streets. They quickly pointed out that even in the weather God was with them, supporting their outcry against tyranny.

In Bucharest, the capital, the young people were in the forefront of the uprising. University students as well as other, younger people went out to meet the secret police who faced them with machine guns and automatic rifles. The young people shouted, "You with weapons, we with flowers! You with weapons, we with flowers! No violence, no violence!"

Despite the youth and immaturity of the crowds that could have contributed to mob action, no shop windows were broken nor stores looted. During the entire time the masses gathered, a respect for property and people prevailed. Pastors, Christian believers, and young people were in the forefront of it all, and the mood seemed solemn, with even a reverential worship of God.

Why was the Romanian uprising like that? What explains the God-centered dignity maintained despite the secret police and government-supported violence that killed as many as ten thousand people in Timisoara and Bucharest? Living in such a repressive, brutal police state usually produces a seething caldron of hate and bitterness in the hearts of the people. Instead the people acted with grace and dignity and the courage to die for their beliefs. Why?

[†] See Ed Scarce, "The Spirit of God Was There," *Moody*, July/August 1990, 47.

The people's courage comes from a strong faith and visible displays of God's protection. During my visit as part of a four-man team, I saw how God's good angels and the power of the Holy Spirit protect from evil those who do good deeds in His name.

FROM IOWA TO ROMANIA

I have to admit that the palms of my hands were moist and my mouth was dry as we were en route to Romania. One of the four members of my group prayed. "Loving, heavenly Father, we are coming to Romania to encourage our brothers and sisters in Christ and to encourage ourselves by the vibrancy of their faith. We yield ourselves fully unto Thee. We pray that the medicines we are bringing may be allowed into the country. May the Christian books we are bringing be overlooked by the border inspectors. We know that Jesus Christ who made blind eyes see is also capable of making seeing eyes blind when it is His will and purpose to do so. May your guardian angels attend us and intervene in our entrance into Romania ..."

As he continued to pray, I sensed the return of a peaceful calm. If we were, as we believed, on a divine mission with a sovereign plan, the Lord would bring it all together. The plans for this trip had been initiated two years before, during the annual missionary conference of our church. God had graciously spoken to us concerning the believers of the "suffering church." The main speaker, Pastor Josef Ton, now led the largest Baptist church in continental Europe from exile in the United States.

Several physicians within our church impressed Pastor Ton with their deep spiritual faith, and a plan began to form in his mind. During Ton's exile, members of his church had chosen Dr. Nick Gheorghita as their pastoral leader. "Dr. Nick" was both a preaching layman and a Romanian medical specialist in endocrinology. Because of the demands of the thriving ministry at Second Baptist Church of Oradea, another layman with a degree in clinical psychology, Dr. Paul Negrut, had been added to the pastoral leadership. Ton felt that a church-related visit from Western Christian medical people would both encourage these laymen leaders and strengthen their position in the eyes of the Romanian government.

IMPORTANT CARGO

The three men who had joined me in this ministry venture were a missionary in Austria, Hans Finzel (my son-in-law); a family-practice physician and our mission's committee chairman, Charles Hamm; and a cardiologist with impressive credentials, Michael Chandra. Dr. Chandra was excited at the opportunity to witness for Christ and to learn of the practice of cardiology in Romania. Drs. Hamm and Chandra each brought a large piece of luggage filled with a variety of medicines. Word had come to us that certain medical drugs were in short supply in Romania and that the believers were in need.

In addition, I had felt impressed to bring twenty-five copies each of my two books on spiritual warfare. I had scattered the books in different places in my luggage hoping that at least some would escape detection. I planned to present them as gifts to fellow pastors in Romania.

When the four of us finally reached the border crossing, we noticed that a long line of cars had come to a halt. Armed soldiers and large steel crossbeams barred our path. We would go no farther without proper clearance from Romanian officials. With passports in hand, the four of us stood by the car waiting for instructions. No one seemed in a hurry to give us any.

Our tension mounted as the time passed. Then I heard a familiar noise. My eyes followed the sound into the rafters holding the steel roof over the inspection area. There, a resting dove cooed. Its calling became a comforting sound, and I immediately sensed a symbolic message. I remembered that the Holy Spirit had descended as a dove upon the Lord Jesus Christ. I felt reassured. God was with us.

Before we left Vienna, Hans had telephoned Dr. Paul to tell him of our expected time of arrival, and Dr. Paul asked, "Do you have the medicine for the hospital?"

Hans assured him that we had a generous supply.

"Good! I'll try to meet you at the border and help you through customs," Paul responded.

We felt reassured, knowing that a friend was going to meet us. We wondered, though, about his reference to "medicine for the hospital." What exactly did he mean?

An official finally came to the car and asked for our passports. Taking them, he left us waiting to be told what to do next. After what seemed a much longer time than it actually was, things began to happen.

UNSEEN CARGO

Several officials moved our way, some in uniform and some in civilian clothes. They greeted us warmly, and we became aware that they, the official committee from the Oradea Hospital, had been waiting at the border for us. The chairman of protocol introduced himself, the hospital director, and the director of nursing. They assured us that as soon as we cleared customs, they would escort us to our hotel. Excusing themselves, they went back into the building, leaving us with the inspector who would examine our car and its contents.

The inspector was dressed in a military uniform. His stern appearance, piercing eyes, and businesslike manner told us he would look us over thoroughly. Each of us was instructed to lift his luggage from the car, open it, and stand by it until it was inspected. Carefully, the official looked through the emptied car, probing here and there and inspecting under the hood. As this continued, all I could think about was my books. With their titles, *The Adversary* and *Overcoming the Adversary*, I doubted they would get through if discovered. *How would I explain the presence of so many of these books?* I asked myself. Then another thought crossed my mind. *Will their discovery ruin what seems to be a cordial welcome from the officials and the hospital medical committee?*

Those thoughts were suddenly interrupted as the inspector moved toward my suitcases. After asking me to identify my pieces of luggage, he began to dig through the clothing. A lump formed in my throat. I saw his hands go into my suitcase at the very spot where ten of my books had been placed. They were wrapped in groups of five, and I knew he would see or feel them.

As he pushed the clothing aside, I stared in amazement at the spot. The books weren't there! I didn't see them and neither did the inspector. He motioned for me to close my luggage and he moved on to Dr. Hamm. Eagerly I complied. Placing my luggage back in the car, I wondered, *Did I put the books someplace else?*

The inspector finished Dr. Hamm's inspection, and I was surprised to see the doctor receive clearance. I knew that one of Dr. Hamm's carry-on bags was jammed full of the medicines for the Christian believers. Why had the inspector not mentioned the medicine?

My curiosity was further aroused as I watched the inspector examine Dr. Chandra's luggage. Opening a large suitcase, the inspector gazed upon lots of the latest cardiac medicines and drugs supplied by various U.S. pharmaceutical companies. Seeing the drugs, the inspector was obviously alerted. He took several of the samples and disappeared into the adjoining building.

The inspector soon reappeared, accompanied by the smiling hospital officials. To our happy surprise, Dr. Paul was with them. Arrangements were made for Dr. Chandra to present the medicines immediately as a gift to the hospital. Dr. Chandra was allowed to keep in his possession two of the latest cardiology books, which he planned to present as a gift to the cardiologists of Romania. We learned that a formal presentation was planned for the next day at the hospital in Oradea.

TWO MIRACLES

As we followed the car of the welcoming committee into Oradea, we had opportunity to debrief the members on the details of our entrance. With excitement, Dr. Hamm told how the inspector had completely overlooked his opened travel bag with the large supply of medicines. Though it was on the ground beside the table holding his other luggage, God had protected it from discovery.

Perhaps an unseen angel had stepped in front of it, concealing it from the probing eyes of the inspector, I thought. Clearly, needy believers would have their medicines.

With equal excitement, I recounted my experience of the undiscovered books. We rejoiced together. We had just witnessed twice God's sovereign, miracle ways. When we later arrived in our hotel room, I eagerly opened my luggage. Sure enough, the books were right there all the time. In ways known only to God, He had shielded their presence from physical view.

As I later presented them to different pastors, some asked, "How did these ever come through the border without confiscation?" What a joy to tell them that the Lord had miraculously prevented the books' discovery.

After arranging for the official hospital visit the next day, the four of us enjoyed a delicious meal at the hotel with Dr. Paul as our host. We relaxed in happy fellowship. Dr. Paul was young, in his early thirties, and his handsome, confident appearance made him impressive. His keen alertness, sense of humor, and spiritual warmth drew us to him. God had lifted this outstanding champion from among his peers to lead His church in such a time as this. Satan's program is destined to fail with such men of God in leadership.

FOUR MORE MIRACLES

Later, in a more private setting, Dr. Paul told us about the four miracles he had witnessed in our entrance into Romania. They were firsts as far as he knew: (1) A group recognized as Christians from the West were received as official guests by the government authorities; (2) Dr. Chandra as a Christian physician was officially invited to address the medical doctors on any subject in the field of cardiology; (3) we were received without needing to agree to any daily rate-exchange fee required of all Westerners; and (4) the official welcoming committee included not only the hospital medical people and the communist protocol chairman but also one of the pastors of the Second Baptist Church of Oradea.

Dr. Paul went on to say, "This could never happen in Romania, but it did. God is still sovereign!"

We spent the evening of our arrival in the home of Dr. Paul Negrut and his wife. They obviously loved their country and the people of Romania with a great loyalty. People came and went in a constant procession. The love and warmth of Jesus Christ drew them like bees to flowers. Such popularity did not go unnoticed by the communist authorities. Christian leaders like Dr. Paul and Dr. Nick were held in constant suspicion. The church itself was viewed as a threat to the communist system.

THE IGNITING SPARKS OF A CHURCH UNDER COMMUNISM

Being a Christian in a communist country demands carrying a cross with many painful barbs. Despite their hardships, the believers remain vibrant and strong. We saw revolutionary revival in process. Though under communism Romania was an atheistic country, some of the healthiest Christianity in the world of our day existed in Romania.

When evangelist Billy Graham was permitted to preach there in 1985, he observed that spiritual vitality. The leaders of what the government called the "Department of Cults" had invited him, and meetings were arranged in various churches and centers throughout the country. These meetings were not given publicity or advance notice, yet crowds of up to thirty thousand people would appear where Dr. Graham spoke. Knowledge of the meetings spread through an invisible network of believers.

When we were there, we witnessed a spiritual fire that could not be quenched. The Lord Jesus Christ had lifted up a people hungry for Him and His Word. The thirst for "living water" continued to increase despite the obstacles. Jesus Christ was building His church in Romania. We observed a spiritual uprising standing in the wings ready to make a grand entrance, and no one was able to stop it. Only God's sovereign plan and His providential timing could know the moment of outbreak.

In 1990 it came: A dictator died, communism toppled, and the vibrant Christian church led the way.

Since our trip to Romania, I have had opportunity to reflect upon the biblical factors we saw, factors that started the spiritual fires that would lead to democracy. The principles we witnessed at work are known in the history of the church. The same principles have fueled the fires of every spiritual awakening that has ever graced the church. Those principles can and do break Satan's bondage in any age.



Appendix D

QUICK REFERENCE GUIDE TO REVIVAL PRAYING

While some of history's revivals have had much larger geographic impact than others, they all share a commonality of fruits. Below is a listing of the noticeable features of revolutionary revivals, both before and during the revival. Each feature listed is paired with a meaningful prayer petition. My earnest hope is that God will bring our united prayers for revival into a concert of intercession.

Features of the Prelude to Revival

1. A cultural acceleration and absorption with what the Bible calls sin and gross wickedness.
2. Apathy, carnality, and a program-centered emphasis on church ministry.
3. Indifference toward spiritual matters by the church's young people.
4. The beginning of a burden for revival awakening on the part of individuals and groups.
5. The presence of a crisis atmosphere throughout the culture.
6. A drawing together of hungry people across denominational lines to pray and seek God.

Prelude Praying

1. Express repentance and apology to God by naming the prominent cultural sins in ongoing intercession.
2. Ask God to grant spiritual sight to the eyes of His church leaders.
3. Pull down spiritual blindness and worldliness that Satan promotes to our youth.
4. Ask God to raise up intercessors who will spend the time and pay the price required in revival praying.
5. Ask God to precipitate whatever He knows will awaken a spiritual hunger in human hearts.
6. Ask God to raise up interdenominational prayer groups that will persevere until revival comes.

FEATURES AND PRAYERS BEFORE REVIVAL

Features of the Revival Awakening

1. The coming of an awareness of the nearness of God to individuals, communities, and cultures.
2. God's sovereign choice of special leaders whom He desires to anoint for the awakening.
3. The "outbreak" of revival in a sovereignly chosen place and subsequent from spreading that point to others.
4. A deep, personal conviction of sin, painful to saint and sinner alike, which leads to spiritual renewal or new birth; transformed lives which begin to transform the culture.
5. A spiritual concern for people, which results in increasing Christian service and ministry.
6. Large numbers of people coming to know Christ as Savior. Evangelistic efforts reaping a large harvest of believers who need to be brought into the church.
7. Opposition attacks on the work of God's revolutionary revival awakenings.
8. God sending supernatural happenings (e.g., trancelike states, healings, etc.) as He moves in revolutionary revival awakenings (may or may not happen).
9. Joyful music, worship, and praise expressed spontaneously and frequently; people compelled to share what God means to them and what He is doing.
10. Satan's hatred of revival manifested in subtle attempts to discredit or neutralize the movement.
11. Extended meetings, conviction of sin, prayer burden for souls, etc., robbing people of sleep and rest; some people may overextend themselves, leading to physical exhaustion.
12. Outbreaks of extremism, often coming from well-meaning people but discrediting the movement and quenching the Holy Spirit.
13. Churches beginning to overflow with seekers and worshippers to the point that they cannot handle them all.
14. Mushrooming of volunteers for Christian service.
15. Media attention becoming alert to what God is doing and beginning to give the movement favorable publicity. (This may not happen, but it often does.)

Supportive Prayer for Revival Awakenings

1. Pray with Isaiah: "Oh, that you would rend the heavens and come down, that the mountains would tremble before you!" (64:1).
2. Pray for God to prepare the hearts and minds of those whom He has chosen to lead in revival awakening.
3. Ask the Lord to prepare His chosen place for the revolutionary revival to begin.
4. Ask the Holy Spirit to intensify His ministry of convicting the world of guilt in regard to sin, righteousness, and judgment; ask God to make sin exceedingly repugnant to His people.
5. Pray that the Lord of the harvest will stir His people for local and worldwide evangelism.
6. Ask the Lord to bring in multitudes who are not yet in His fold; pray that the churches will bring the newly converted into full body life.
7. Ask God to grant wisdom, boldness, and humility to revival leaders to handle opposition; pray for opposers to be convicted, converted, and enfolded.
8. Pray that people will allow God to be God in His dealings and that He will protect the revival from those seeking or promoting supernatural occurrences.
9. Ask God to prepare leaders to aid people in expressing their worship and praise, and for protection from showmanship or celebrity-centered leadership.
10. Ask God for intercessors who understand spiritual warfare and who will continually protect the revival awakening in prayer.
11. Ask God not only to quicken people in such times but also to help them balance their capacities and priorities.
12. Pray for God's protection from extremism and that He will quench any such action before it can gain a following.
13. Ask God to grant wisdom and innovative ideas to the church leaders so they can handle crowds without expensive building programs.
14. Pray that spiritually qualified colleges, Bible schools, seminaries, and training centers will be ready to train the influx.
15. Ask God to prepare leadership in every area of the media in order to facilitate the spread of the revival message.



Appendix E

SOME HELPFUL TOOLS

SAMPLE LETTER OF INVITATION FOR BEGINNING A CITYWIDE PRAYER FELLOWSHIP

Dear Brothers in Christ,
Greetings in our Savior's name.

Most of us have repeatedly read Luke's account of the triumphal entry of the Lord Jesus Christ into Jerusalem. Luke tells us that as Jesus approached Jerusalem, He saw the city, wept over it, and spoke to it in prayer and love. With fresh concern, some of us are feeling the spiritual need for our city, but these needs are too large for any of us to bear alone. It seems time for pastors and laymen, those who feel the burden and see the needs, to come together for united prayer. We ask you to join us.

We have found a convenient, neutral setting at (place).

Beginning on (date), we invite you to meet with us there at (time) each (day) for an hour of prayer for our area. We want to see our city as our Lord Jesus Christ sees it. Perhaps we may feel God's burden deeply enough that we can weep for the city and, through our prayers, begin to speak to its great needs.

We suggest the following guidelines as a basis for our united prayer:

Each week we will share in reading two chapters from God's Word without editorial comment. Each person will be free to participate by reading five verses. We will cover the first two chapters of John at our first meeting.

Immediately following the Scripture reading, we will pray together in small-group settings of three or four people. (Conversational style of praying would be in order, but the praying will not be limited to that mode.)

Prayer requests will be received, but our prayer will focus on the great needs of our community. Areas of focus might include churches, youth, economic conditions, crime, prostitution, pornography, drugs, alcohol, violence, pulling down strongholds that hinder revival, repentance, and a united laying hold of God's grace and mercy to touch our city in a fresh visit.

To make sure that all who attend will be comfortable in the prayer setting, we ask that our praying be limited to the English language.

Though we may pray for ministries and spiritual outreaches in the city, this prayer group will avoid the sponsoring or planning of any such programs.

The prayer times are open to all who feel a common spiritual concern. Participants may come and go according to their own schedule.

The prayer times will begin promptly at (starting time) and conclude promptly at (finishing time; an hour is recommended).

Formal organization will be avoided, and the group will not make any "pronouncements" on issues facing the city. Our motive is to pray.

These meetings will continue as long as the interest remains at a level to so warrant.

We will attempt to keep the place of meeting at a denominationally neutral setting.

Sincerely,

(Signed by six pastors and Christian lay businessmen)

P.S. Please spread the word.

SAMPLE RESOLUTION FOR TAKING FURTHER REVIVAL ACTION STEPS

Eventually, some may feel they would like to explore a united evangelistic effort on a larger scale. After an extended time of prayer meetings for revival has elapsed, some may sense that God is leading toward action. This needs to be explored. The following proposal is a suggested resolution to bring the interested churches together for further revival steps. It would be wise to keep such moves separate from the prayer focus for revival.

WHEREAS, there is an abundant need for spiritual renewal in our city as evidenced by such things as

1. the increasing problems of gang activity, violence, drug addiction, sexual promiscuity, and alcohol consumption among our children and youth;
2. the appeal and proliferation of various expressions of satanic cultism that are afflicting our local culture;
3. decreasing attendance of younger people in worship at most of our mainline denominational churches;
4. the pervasiveness of unbiblical and unwholesome sexual materials and practices that often lead to incest and sexual abuse;
5. the questionable emphasis upon gambling as being suitable recreation for our citizens and tax revenue for our government;
6. the morality breakdown characterized by cursing and degrading speech in the workplace, frequent hostility between labor and management, general indifference toward the needs of the poor and suffering, and the widespread problem of family disintegration; and

WHEREAS, the Christian faith and the gospel message of our Lord Jesus Christ are capable of confronting human needs and transforming the culture through changed human lives; and

WHEREAS, we believe that the Lord Jesus Christ is God the Son who came in human flesh, was crucified for our sins, and rose again from the dead for our justification; and

WHEREAS, Jesus Christ declared that the Holy Spirit has come into our world to “convict the world of guilt in regard to sin and righteousness and judgment” (John 16:8); and

WHEREAS, we desire to reach out to our loving heavenly Father that He might grace us with a refreshing breath of spiritual renewal in our city; and

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that we unite our hearts and efforts together to seek such spiritual renewal in these several ways:

1. We will commit ourselves to regular corporate and private prayer to God for His sovereign intervention to bring to our city the spiritual renewal it needs.
2. We call together the spiritual leadership of the churches and denominations of our city to share our concerns and to unite our efforts to see spiritual renewal visit our city.
3. We are open to establishing an interdenominational task force of spiritually minded Christian leaders as a planning and coordinating group to promote renewal in our area.

A PRAYER GUIDE FOR CONCERNED CHRISTIANS WHEN PRAYING FOR NON-CHRISTIANS

*Discipleship Journal** offers these guidelines for praying for the spiritual rebirth of non-Christians:

- * Pray that God draws them to Himself (John 6:44).
- Pray that they seek to know God (Acts 17:27; Deut. 4:29).
- Pray that they believe the Scriptures (1 Thess. 2:13; Rom. 10:17).
- Pray that Satan be bound from blinding them to the truth (Matt. 13:19; 2 Cor. 4:4).
- Pray that the Holy Spirit works in them (John 16:8–13).
- Pray that God sends someone to lead them to Christ (Matt. 9:37–38).
- Pray that they believe in Christ as Savior (John 1:12; 5:24).
- Pray that they turn from sin (Acts 3:19; 17:30–31).

- Pray that they confess Christ as Lord (Rom. 10:9–10).
- Pray that they yield all to follow Christ (2 Cor. 5:15; Phil. 3:7–8).
- Pray that they take root and grow in Christ (Col. 2:6–7).

^{22*} Reprinted from *Discipleship Journal*. Same two-column idea here as above suggestion with this subhead and the following Supportive Prayer for Revival Awakenings subhead.