



Network for Revival Prepare Issue 41 - November 2022

The Korean Revival 1907

In 1906 missionaries in Korea met each morning at 5am to pray for an outpouring of the Spirit. In January 1907 1500 church leaders gathered for a conference in Pyongyang and the missionaries met for prayer about it. One of them described the prayer "We were bound in spirit and refused to let God go till He blessed us." That night the conference members were praying, all at the same time. It was orderly, harmonised prayer, later called "a concert of prayer." Many of those involved became deeply convicted of sin and cried out to God for mercy.

Two well-known church leaders were known to be antagonistic to one another. One of them made a public confession and eventually the other followed suit. He asked a missionary to pray for him. He started to do so and then (he later reported) "It seemed as if the roof was lifted from the building and the Spirit of God came down from heaven in a mighty avalanche of power among us." He added "I prayed as I had never prayed before."

Hundreds prayed with their arms raised. Some fell to the floor, crying out for mercy. The meeting lasted for six hours, finishing at 2am. A similar revival spread throughout the churches and they reported that "drunkards, gamblers, adulterers, murderers, thieves, self-righteous, Confucianists and others" were transformed.

The 1910 Edinburgh World Missionary Conference reported, "The Korean Revival ... has been a genuine Pentecost, for Korean church membership quadrupled in a decade." By 1910, there were 79,221 new members in Korean churches. By 1912, there were some 300,000 Korean Protestant church members out of a population of twelve million.

One of the results was a wonderful prayer life in the churches. The revival emerged from intense prayer and that prayer continued. Many Korean churches still have "concerts of prayer" on a Sunday morning, asking in unison for God's forgiveness and blessing. Many Korean Christians still meet at 5am every morning for "Dawn Meetings" of prayer and they have a night of prayer every Friday. They also have "prayer mountains" (mountain retreats for Christians to stay for days or weeks of prayer).

In the year 2000, one third of the South Korean population attended church.

A church which is radically biblical in the power of the Spirit

A church prepared for Revival

History shows that, whereas some Revivals last a long time, other revivals can fade away fairly quickly or even go off the rails. We need to be prepared for Revival in prayer and holiness. But we also need churches to be prepared to follow up people affected by revival, especially those with no Christian background. Such churches need to be radically biblical in the power of the Spirit. If you are not in church leadership or in a sympathetic church, the strategy we recommend can work out in a home group. In fact, such groups are part of the strategy we recommend. Prayer is fundamental.

What is the situation in your church?

Are you facing any of the following challenges:

- Little or no corporate prayer outside the services?
- Decisions not made in the context of corporate prayer?
- Tensions or even factions?
- Members content to be “fed” and served by the Minister, rather than to serve?
- An emphasis on maintenance rather than outreach?
- Lack of a sense of direction?

If so, then **these are priorities for prayer** by those who are willing to pray together. The leadership need to:

- Pray for transformation (only the Holy Spirit can bring it, in answer to prayer),
- Teach biblical standards (which is what this series of articles in Prepare is all about),
- Offer help and counsel to members.

What should the church be like?

Churches should:

- Be “one in heart and mind” (Acts 4:32).
- Run on the basis of prayer.
- Be uplifted in worship.
- Encourage every member ministry (discerning people’s gifts).
- Seek holiness (gently encouraging and correcting one another as necessary).
- Reach out to unbelievers.

This series of articles, in the future issues of Prepare!, will make practical recommendations about these matters. It will also offer advice on how to overcome two barriers to biblical church development: disunity and difficulties in delegation.

The unity of the local congregation

Unity of the church was a high priority in the heart of Jesus, on the night he was betrayed. He prayed “*My prayer is not for them alone. I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message, that all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you. May they also be in us so that the world may believe that you have sent me. I have given them the glory that you gave me, that they may be one as we are one – I in them and you in me – so that they may be brought to complete unity. Then the world will know that you sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me*” (Jn 17:20-23).

As we move through this series, I urge you to make this a priority in prayer (corporate prayer if possible) – ***the unity in diversity of our local church.***

A word to the retired (or those not in employment)

There are a number of retired people on the mailing list, and I believe they have an important role to play. If you are retired (or not in employment) I urge you to major on prayer – far more than you have been able to in the past. My mind goes back to Anna. She was 84 years old and “she never left the temple but worshipped night and day, fasting and praying” (Lk 2:37).

If you do major on prayer, it will, of course, greatly further God’s purposes, including with respect to Revival. But you will also find it immensely rewarding as the Lord speaks to you - with the Bible “coming alive” - and deepens your faith (however long you’ve been a believer). Why not decide to spend, say, an extra hour each day in prayer, including listening to the Lord. I find it helpful to write down my thoughts and my regular prayers.

Also, you may be able to run a home group, using the principles I shall be outlining in Prepare! This may be linked with your local church or an independent private initiative.

Go for it!

God bless you,

Tony

PS. A NEW ARTICLE I HAVE WRITTEN

When the disciples asked Jesus about the signs of the End, he told them that war was a reminder of it (Matt 24:6-8). I have written a paper on the subject **“THE DANGER OF MODERN WAR”** which covers the false sense of security over nuclear weapons; non-nuclear warfare, religious motivation for war etc. It includes serious comments by leading politicians and others about the current dangers. See [The-danger-of-modern-war.pdf \(christianteaching.org.uk\)](http://christianteaching.org.uk/The-danger-of-modern-war.pdf)

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In Network for Revival God has called us to “make ready a people prepared for the Lord.” This includes: Encouraging people to seek holiness and true biblical discipleship.

- Encouraging people to major on prayer for Revival.
- Encouraging churches to be radically biblical in the power of the Spirit (see Church Development for information and resources).
- Encouraging people to “Watch!” for the return of Jesus (Mk 13:32-37 – see Eschatology).