

When God Shows Up For Church

Dave Butts

Christians around the world are praying for revival. What exactly is meant by “revival”? Some think in terms of great meetings or tremendous evangelistic outreach. Others think more in terms of Christians who are encouraged and brought to a new level of commitment in their faith. Certainly Christians should be praying for revival, but what is it we are praying for and about?

Though many have given good definitions of revival, I still like this simple little description: Revival happens when God shows up for church. In a real sense, the Lord is always present when His people gather in His Name. But all too often His presence goes unnoticed. This definition recognizes the fact that when the people of God become aware of the Presence of the Lord, everything changes. Our worship services, our family lives, our evangelistic efforts, and our individual devotional lives will all be different when God shows up for church.

The Bible teaches us the amazing fact that God has come to dwell in us through His Holy Spirit. The Old Testament name given to the Messiah was Emmanuel...God with us. Colossians 1:27 teaches us the mystery of God – *“Christ in [us], the hope of glory.”* Jesus said, *“If anyone loves Me, he will obey My teaching. My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our home with him”* (John 14:23). The Lord also made it clear that when two or more are gathered together, He would be there in our midst.

Much as the temple or the tabernacle in the Old Testament was a place where the Presence of God was manifest on earth, so now the gathered Church becomes a place where His Presence is known. Our theology is clear on that fact. Unfortunately, our

experience normally fails to match up to our theology. Most churches meet for worship, teaching and fellowship and leave again without truly being aware of God in their midst.

Praying for revival is praying for open eyes among the people of God. Lord, help us to see Jesus! Open the eyes of our hearts that we might know You and become aware of Your Presence here in our lives.

The experience of Israel under the leadership of Moses is a great teacher for the Church today as we cry out to God for revival. My friend, Terry Teykl, wrote a powerful book entitled *The Presence Based Church*. He writes, "As a result of their unique relationship with God, the Israelites became the original Presence based people. Under the leadership of Moses, and at God's bidding, they made the Presence the axis of their lives.

"The Ark of the Covenant was always located in the tabernacle at the very center of the camp. The 12 tribes were divided into four groups and stationed symmetrically around the Presence: three to the north, three to the south, three to the east, and three to the west. By day they saw the cloud that hung over the tent, and by night they would lie in the entrance to their own tents and watch the fire. As long as the Presence stayed, they stayed. But when the Presence moved, they followed. They were Presence led and Presence drawn" (Pg.89).

In Exodus 33, verses 13-17, there is a fascinating conversation between the Lord and Moses concerning His Presence. "*The LORD replied, 'My Presence will go with you, and I will give you rest.'*" Then Moses said to Him, "*If Your Presence does not go with us, do not send us up from here. How will anyone know that You are pleased with me and with Your people unless You go with us? What else will distinguish me and Your people from all the other people on the face of the earth?*" The Lord replied, "*I will do the very thing you have*

asked, because I am pleased with you and I know you by name."

Moses understood how critical it was for Israel to stay with the Presence of God. When the Church today grabs hold of that fact, we will see revival. When the Church, like Moses, commits to going only where the Lord leads, then we will be making progress. It is time for us to cry out for the Lord to make us aware of His Presence.

Teykl offers great insight as to the effects of the manifest Presence of God:

"Where His Presence is being manifested, God's glory is evident. When the Presence fell on the Mercy Seat of the Ark, His glory filled the tabernacle to such an extent that no one could go near. His Presence was noticeable. Think about it. If God were to manifest His Presence in your church, shouldn't it be just as noticeable as it was in the tabernacle? Is not God that same God that descended in the Holy Place and rested among His chosen people in fire and cloud? Is He not the same God who, from the Mercy Seat, displayed His power and authority, guided and governed the Israelites, gave them victory over their enemies, demonstrated His favor and love, established His uniqueness and offered atonement for sin?

"Where God's Presence is being manifested today, the same results are evident. Humility and uncommon zeal characterize people of the Presence because they have seen His power and know of His authority in the earth. Where the Presence is, wisdom and peace prevail through His guidance. Pathways become clear and sound decisions are made. In the Presence, people gain victory over habits or emotions that have held them captive for years. Relationships are healed, lives are transformed, joy is evident and the powers of darkness are forced to retreat. In the Presence, many call on the name of Jesus and are saved in response to the wave of supernatural love and grace that penetrates their spirits" (Pg.201).

Does that sound a bit like revival to you? It does to me. I'm praying for an increased hunger for His Presence in my life, my family, and my church. As God answers that prayer, we will begin to see an increased awareness of the activity of the Lord in the midst of His people. Join me in praying for God to "show up for church."

(c) Harvest Prayer Ministries

-Dave Butts is the president of Harvest Prayer Ministries and the author of several books.

Praying Out Loud Isn't as Hard as You Think!

God can hear our prayers anytime, anywhere, and at any volume! He is able to hear us even when we think our prayers to Him rather than voice them. Yet, so many of us struggle and would like to be able to verbalize prayers in a group setting. Here are a few tips on how to stretch yourself a bit and grow in this area:

1. One of the best ways to grow in praying out loud, is to practice listening to yourself reading prayers from Scripture. You could start with the Lord's Prayer in Matthew 6:9-13. Hearing your own voice as you pray out loud is an important step.
2. Read Psalm 145 out loud back to the Lord and then say, "Lord, You are___(fill in the blank with some of the attributes you find in this Psalm). Looking for ways to praise God in His word is a powerful way to express your love for Him out loud. The more you know about Him and His goodness and love, the more you will want to express

what's on your heart to Him.

3. After using Scripture to help you pray out loud for awhile, try to voice your own prayers based on those you have been praying. Here is just one way: try looking at pictures of some of your family members and tell God what you want to pray for each of them. For example, "Father, my daughter Emily is really struggling to make friends in her new school this year. Would you bring her some godly young women to get to know?" Or, "Lord, my husband has such a stressful job. Please help him to feel Your presence and to be filled with peace instead of anxiety."
4. When you are ready to try praying in a group, first recognize that you are talking only to God, and not to the other people around you. Flowery or "super-spiritual" language is not required. Talk to Him as you would talk to a good friend about the person or situation you are concerned about. Don't worry about how others view your prayer...it is between you and God alone.
5. Spend time with others who are in love with Jesus and listen to them pray. Ask them how they learned to pray out loud and see if they can give you some good ideas as well!

As with anything new you undertake, the more you practice praying out loud, the more confident and comfortable you will become.

Kim Butts is the Vice President of [Harvest Prayer Ministries](#). She has written numerous articles and has authored or co-authored several books on prayer.

Praying into the Second Coming of Jesus

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Dave & Kim Butts with Billy Graham's daughter, Anne Graham Lotz.

"And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come" (Matt.24:14).

May I suggest to you that this massive, world-changing event, which Jesus told us to watch for, happened during the funeral

of Billy Graham. In every nation, even those we call closed nations, the funeral of the world's greatest evangelist presented the gospel of the kingdom with clarity and power. Oh, yes, I know that there is still much evangelism ahead of us. But it is a mopping up operation after the gospel has gone around the world.

If this is the case, and I strongly believe that it is, then we are living in amazing times that require much of us. Prayer must move to the forefront of every initiative of the Church as we work in cooperation with the Holy Spirit. Living toward the end of the end of days means we must draw closer than ever to the Lord in intimate prayer and receive our clear marching orders from Him. We should expect to see a Spirit initiated revival in the Church.

The death of an astonishingly effective evangelist like Billy Graham often brings the question of who will take his place. We are often drawn to the Old Testament story of the mantle of Elijah being passed to Elisha and we ask who will receive the mantle of Billy Graham. The answer is, "No man!" It is a mantle for the Church to wear as we prepare the way for the coming of Jesus. Prayer and evangelism are to become a lifestyle for the whole Church as we move out of our comfort zones and into the war zones of front line Christian living!

There is a wave of prayer that is moving across the face of the earth right now. It is prayer that is focused, not on receiving what we want from God, but on the advance of His Kingdom. In Billy Graham's latter years he gave himself more and more to prayer. That is a picture of what needs to happen in the Church right now. We must give ourselves more and more to prayer as we cooperate with God in His work on earth.

As God prepared the earth for the first coming of Jesus two thousand years ago, He placed in Jerusalem two older saints, Anna and Simeon. They gave themselves to prayer in anticipation of the coming of the Messiah. God is doing the

same thing today in preparation for the return of Jesus to planet earth. He is raising up his saints who will give themselves to prayer that paves the way for the coming of Jesus.

I don't know about you, but I want in on that prayerful mission that will see the triumphal return of Jesus in His timing and in His way!

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PRAYER AND THE END OF DAYS

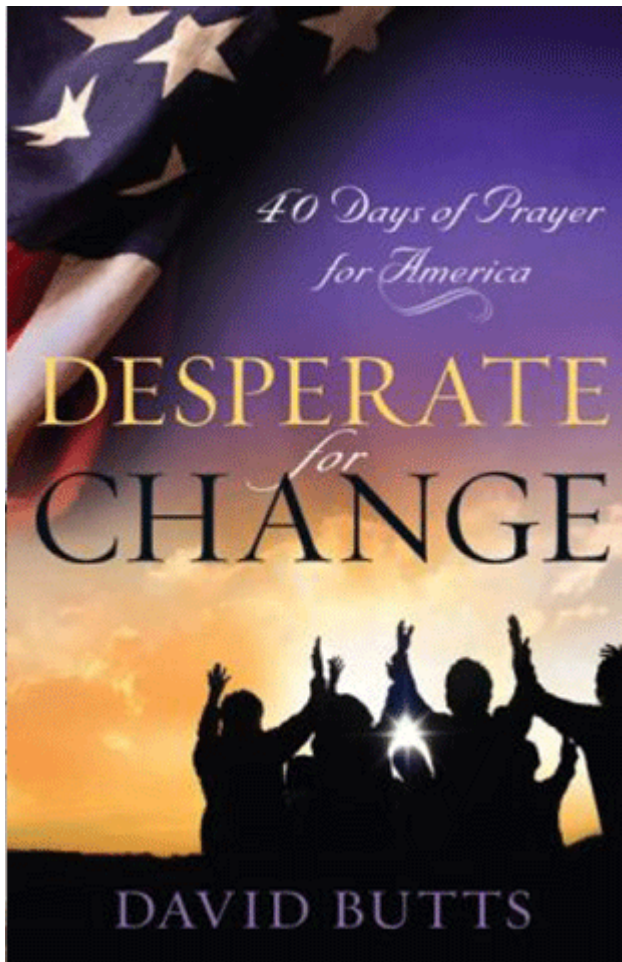
PRAYING GOD'S
PURPOSES IN
TROUBLED TIMES



FORGOTTEN POWER

A Simple Theology for a Praying Church

DAVID BUTTS



The Key to Relieving Your Fear

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Though unwanted, fear seems to be a universal part of life.

Reaction to fear varies from person to person, but fears that are not dealt with can bring damage and paralysis to a life. An example would be the individual with acrophobia (a fear of heights) who may be paralyzed with terror when faced with

being in a tall building, or even climbing a small ladder. That's just one example of many of how fear can bind us and keep us from a fulfilled, joyful life.

Christians should and often do, turn to the Lord and ask Him to take away their fears. That is a simple request and really is something we can do in full assurance since the Lord does not want us to live in fear. One of the most common commands in scripture from the Lord is: "Fear not!"

Where difficulty enters in is when we pray, asking for fear to be removed, and nothing seems to happen. We find ourselves as paralyzed by fear as before we prayed. What happened? Or rather, what didn't happen and why? There are probably many answers that have to do with our unwillingness to let go of fear. But I believe God's Word gives us a wonderful way to bypass the blocks to removing fear and receive great peace.

David's prayer in Psalm 34:4 "I sought the LORD, and he answered me and delivered me from all my fears," contains the key: "I sought the Lord." His desire was not so much for fears to be relieved as it was to experience the presence of the Lord. He sought God, not just what God would do for him or give him. It's a pure prayer that focuses on the Lord and brings delight to God's heart.

What about the fear issue? David made it clear that when he sought the Lord, the Lord delivered him from all his fears. Just like a parent coming into the room of a fearful child, that's the natural response to the presence of our Heavenly Father.

It's just as Jesus taught us, if we seek Him first, then many good things will follow. As you seek the Lord and enjoy His presence, you will find that your fears have subsided and peace has taken their place.

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Some of Dave's Book



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PRAYER AND THE END OF DAYS

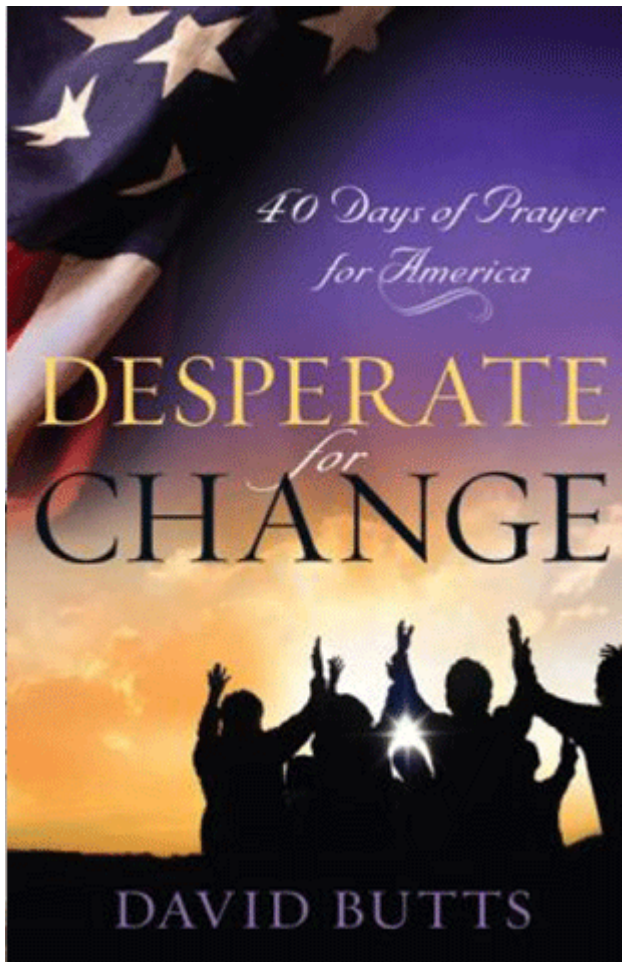
PRAYING GOD'S
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Prayer: Power for Revival



David Butts



Has Revival Started?

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Saturday, October 7, 2017, is marked in my mind and heart as one of the most extraordinary days I've ever experienced. That's kind of funny because it doesn't involve one of those big, memorable events that so often mark our memories. I was in Washington, D.C. for the Awaken the Dawn days of worship and prayer.

Though there was a main stage and some really great worship

leaders and speakers, that's not what I will carry with me the rest of my life. What impacted me most were 58 tents, one for each state, along with tents for regions and Israel, all of them filled with Christ followers who worshiped and prayed 24 hours a day over the course of three days.

Again and again as I walked through our National Mall, I was struck by the extraordinary nature of unending prayer and worship in the heart of our nation. In the center of our Capitol, where power is often an idol, Jesus was continually worshiped. Most of the time it was a small group with a guitar or keyboard in a small tent, though sometimes a louder and larger group in one of the regional tents grabbed my attention. But wherever I went, it was Jesus who was exalted. It was absolutely overwhelming!

And then there was prayer! Not just in the tents, but all over the Mall. People grabbing each other and asking how they could pray for each other. Prayer circles everywhere. These weren't part of some leader's plan, but the work of the Spirit of God prompting the Lord's people to intercede for one another, as well as for those walking by who didn't know Jesus. From Friday afternoon through Monday morning, a spirit of prayer prevailed in our nation's Capitol.

I was also moved by the lack of promotion. You could have asked virtually anyone there, "What ministry or organization is leading this event?," and you would have gotten a shrug of the shoulders. God gave a vision for this to a young man named David Bradshaw and then God moved many ministries and individuals to come alongside. That made this one of those rare events where only Jesus got credit and was exalted.

So now what? I'm praying that the principle of the tents moves across America. It doesn't have to be in a tent, but it is the principle of unending worship and prayer that is firmly focused on Jesus. Will this be a lasting movement? Is this the beginning of revival? It certainly can be. It has all the

marks of revival. If we can avoid self-promotion and continue to make it all about Jesus. If we keep seeing extraordinary worship and prayer that is unending and Christ exalting . . . we just may be seeing that for what so many have longed, for such a long time: a new Christ Awakening in our nation!

[Check out Awaken the Dawn here!](#) The movement continues!

–David Butts (1953-2022) was the co-founder and president of Harvest Prayer Ministries , the chairman of America’s National Prayer Committee and the author of many books on prayer and revival, including [When God Shows Up](#).

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A Simple Theology for a Praying Church

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