

A Word From Your Pastor

"So the Twelve gathered all the disciples together and said, 'It would not be right for us to neglect the ministry of the Word of God in order to wait on tables. Brothers, choose seven men from among you who are known to be full of the Spirit and wisdom. We will turn this responsibility over to them and will give our attention to prayer and the ministry of the Word.'

This proposal pleased the whole group."

Acts 6:2-5a NIV

As I write this letter, we have just returned from a very inspiring week attending the 69th Annual Gathering of the CCCC in Pittsburgh, PA. Our theme for the week was *"First Things First"*, with the main focus being on PRAYER! James 4:8 says, ***"Come near to God and He will come near to you."*** Our guest speaker was Rev. Daniel Henderson, a pastor and also the founder of a ministry called, "Strategic Renewal International" (strategicrenewal.com). Much emphasis during our meetings was placed on the fact that the church in America today has lost the discipline of diligent corporate prayer.

John S. Dickerson said the following in his book called "Revival or Recession?", and I quote, *"When we face the facts about cultural change in America, about increasing hostility toward Christians, and our failure to disciple our own children, we realize that we have before us two options in the American church: 1) Recession, the continued gradual but steady receding of biblical Christianity in the United States; or 2) Revival, a fresh work of God not engineered or manufactured by human strategists, but unleashed by God's Spirit."*



Mr. Dickerson continues, *"Somewhere along the way, unintentionally and gradually, we moved our feet of faith away from desperate dependence on the resurrection of Christ, away from the Holy Spirit as our only source of power, and away from desperate times of prayer."* II Chronicles 7:14 says, **"If**

My people, who are called by My Name, will humble themselves and
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pray," then He will hear from heaven! Amen!

Within the CCCC, a few years ago, the Board of Directors affirmed that the ministry of the Conference (pastors and churches) should be focused on Seven Guiding Values. The first of these Values is:

1) A Culture of Believing Prayer and Intercession

This is why the theme for our meetings was *"First Things First"*. As a congregation, and as individual Believers, we must ask ourselves, "So how are we doing with our prayer lives?" As we are quickly approaching a new school year, and hopefully our schedules will get a little more structured, my desire as your pastor is to see our congregation rise to a new level in our prayer lives. In our local church, Salem Reformed Church, we must have a culture of believing prayer and intercession taking place! What is the prayer level of our lives, our leadership teams, and our congregations? Rev. Jim Cymbala writes, *"Our problem is not with a godless, secular America, but with a church that is increasingly prayer-less, compromised, weak, and demoralized. We have drifted away from the Word of God and the power of the Holy Spirit."*

I agree whole heartedly with the following paragraph that I read from Kyle Lance Martin. Quote: *"We must get on our knees to pray for and pursue revival. Our nation needs it! We are desperate for revival that is so purely of the Holy Spirit it breaks the mold of anything we have seen in our lifetime. It's time to revive who we are in Jesus Christ. True revival begins with us. Because when we embrace Him fully, the comfort zone*



we once put ourselves in goes away. There is no framework, and we are willing to follow the Holy Spirit wherever He leads, no longer concerned about pleasing man. It truly becomes walking by faith through the unknown. And that is when others will be drawn to Christ. They will want what we have!"

Jesus is coming quickly, and the time is now to awaken the world to His truth!

In Christ Alone, Pastor Mike