

God's Prescription for A Sick Land

2 Chronicles 7:14

It was January 20, 1981. Ronald Reagan was about to be sworn in as president. It was cold and clouds threatened to snow any minute.

Suddenly as Reagan stood up to take the oath of office the thick clouds just disappeared. Reagan said about that day, "I felt an explosion of warm light on my face just as I was reciting the same oath that George Washington recited. Not only was my right hand on my mother's Bible, but my hand was over 2 Chronicles 7:14— a verse that was very important to me and my presidency."

By the way, next to that verse in his mother's Bible, Nelle Reagan wrote, "**A most wonderful verse for the healing of this nation.**" (read text)

America has a heart problem— Sin has clogged her arteries so there is little blood flow left. Her heart rate is weakening as evidenced by the following facts:

- We only have 6% of the world's population but we have 80% of the world's divorces.
- America leads the world in murders, rapes, violent crimes and drug use.
- America consumes 79% of all the whiskey, liquor and beer in the world.
- America has the highest high school drop out rate of any other industrialized nation in the world. Yet, we spend more on education than any other nation.

Isaiah described the spiritual condition of Israel in his day— "*From the sole of the foot even unto the head there is no soundness in it; but wounds, and bruises, and putrefying sores: they have not been closed, neither bound up, neither mollified with ointment*" (Isa. 1:6). Could this also be said of America?

➡ We are a sick nation! The plague of sin has crippled us spiritually.

➡ We are wounded—we are bleeding as a nation!

The **greatest need in America** is NOT:

- A cure for AIDS
- Health Care Reform
- Social Unity
- Disaster Relief
- Improved Foreign Relations
- Deficit Reduction

America's single greatest need is an old-fashion, devil chasin', heaven-sent revival!

Our text gives **God's prescription for national healing.**

I. **The POTENTIAL for revival.**

➡ *"If"* a little word, but everything hinges on this two-letter word.

A. *"If"* indicates revival is **POSSIBLE**. We can have it, if we want it.

1. The question is: Just how badly do we want revival?
2. Vance Havner said, "The situation is desperate, but the saints are not."

B. *"If"* implies there are **CONDITIONS**. A price to pay.

1. Revival is not automatic. Conditions must be met.
 - ➡ *"If"* in salvation—*"IF thou shalt confess with thy mouth..."*
2. If we truly desire to see revival individually and collectively, it must be on God's terms, not ours; God's way, not our way.
3. God wants to send revival, but we are not willing to pay the price to have it!

II. **The PEOPLE of revival.**

➡ *"...my people who are called by my name"* — We bear the name of Christ—*"Christian."*

➡ The problem is not with God... not the world. The problem is the church.

A. Revival is not for the sinner but for the saint! Sinners need regeneration—Saints need revival! Psalm 85:6 *"Wilt thou not revive us again: that thy people may rejoice in thee?"*

B. Revival will not begin in the House of Representatives... the White House... It begins at my house, your house, and God's

house! *“For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God”* (1 Pet. 4:17).

1. Instead of the church waiting for America to get right, God is waiting on lukewarm Christians to get right!
2. Let’s quit blaming society... government... the public schools... Wall Street... the news media... Hollywood... the gays... if there is no revival. These are only symptoms of a bigger problem.

III. The PRICE of revival.

➡ Our text has **two parts**: Our part and God’s part. Only God can heal our land. But we must do our part.

➡ The **sequential order** is important.

A. Our **PRIDE** must be brought low—*“...shall humble themselves...”*

1. This is where it begins. It doesn’t start with prayer. Until our pride is dealt with, we are not in a position to pray. God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble. Isaiah 57:15— *“For thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy; I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones.”*

a) Pride is self-idolatry. Pride is man living independent of God. Pride says to God, “I don’t need you.”

➡ The world has *deified man* and *humanized God*.

b) Humility is bowing our knee to God’s authority / Lordship.

c) Humility is acknowledging we need God and apart from Him we are nothing (John 15:5).

d) Humility is admitting our weakness, not boasting of our strength.

President Abraham Lincoln warned America about pride in his 19th century address to the nation saying, “We have grown in numbers, wealth and power as no other nation

has ever grow...Intoxicated by unbroken success, we have become too self-sufficient to feel the necessity of redeeming and preserving grace, too proud to pray to the God that made us.”

2. There will be no revival until we've been brought low enough for God to send revival.
- B. Our **PRAYERS** must be sent up— “...and pray...”
1. America is quick to pray in times of national disaster. But after the danger is past, it goes back to the same condition it was before or even worse.
 2. We desire BIG BLESSINGS, with SMALL INSTALLMENTS of prayer. We are organized, but we fail to agonize.
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Charles Spurgeon likened prayer to ringing a bell in heaven. Prayer pulls the rope below and the bell rings above in the ears of God. Some scarcely stir the bell. Others only give an occasional tug on the rope. But he who is heard in heaven is the man who grasps the rope boldly and pulls continuously, with all his might.

- C. Our **PURSUIT** must be God's face— “...and seek my face...”
- ➡ A person's face will tell you a lot about them—Is he happy... sad... angry... confused... discouraged... tired.
1. Seeking God's face means seeking to know Him... who He is... what He is like... what He thinks... what He wants.
 2. Seeking God's face means seeking His presence... the favor of his countenance... the joy of His will... the depths of His wisdom...
 3. Seeking God's face means taking time out of your schedule... putting your own agenda on hold... turning off the TV... and getting into God's presence on a daily basis! Dr. Tom Malone used to tell us preacher boys, “Seek the face of God before you seek the face of man.”

Not many are seeking God today. You can tell by where they go on Sunday. Few show up at church. Few are interested enough in God to seek Him daily in His Word and prayer.

- D. Our **PERVERSENESS** must be turned from—“...*turn from THEIR wicked ways...*”
- ➡ I don't believe the emphasis here is on robbing banks or murder, although those are wicked. Instead of focusing on the sins of the world, we should focus on the “sins of the saints.”
 - ➡ God commanded Isaiah, “*Cry aloud, spare not, lift up thy voice like a trumpet, and shew my people their transgression, and the house of Jacob their sins*” (Isa. 58:1).
1. An unforgiving spirit. Unresolved anger=Bitterness
 2. Prayerlessness—Prayerlessness is a symptom of a more serious sin—Forsaking God. Instead of trying to get prayer and Bible reading back in the schools, lets get it back in our homes first.
 3. Worry / unbelief — Evil heart of unbelief (Heb. 3:12).
 4. Lustful thoughts.
 5. Covetousness — Idolatry (idols in the heart) Col. 3:5
 6. Failure to serve God (Mal. 3:18—“*Discern between the righteous and the WICKED, between him that serveth God and him that serveth him not.*”).
 7. Poor stewardship (Mt. 25:26).

Repentance— We must turn from our sin. Sin is anything that God doesn't agree with. Can two walk together except they be agreed. You cannot walk with God and the world at the same time. There must be a TURNING if you want to walk with God.

IV. The **PROMISE** of revival.

- ➡ “*If*” indicates a condition — “*then*” indicates the promise.
- A. Heaven **hears**— Does it seem at times that heaven has turned a deaf ear to our cry. Psalm 66:18— *If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me.* (See Isaiah 59:1-2)

- B. God **forgives**. America needs forgiveness.
- C. God **heals**. God longs to heal us... heal our homes... heal our churches... heal our nation! He desires to make us whole... to bind our wounds, and stop the bleeding.

SUMMATION: In 1857, Jeremiah Lamphere had a deep burden for the lost of New York City. He started walking up and down the streets of New York passing out tracts and trying to talk to people about the Lord without much success.

God put it on his heart to try prayer. He passed out hundreds and hundreds of fliers and put up posters everywhere he could. He invited anyone who wanted to come to the 3rd floor of the Old North Dutch Reform Church on Fulton St. from 12 to 1 on Wednesday to pray.

Wednesday came but at noon nobody showed up. So Jeremiah got on his knees and prayed by himself. After 30 minutes five other people walked in. Next week 20 people came. The following week between 30 and 40 people came. They decided to meet every day from 12:00 to 1:00 to pray for the city. A few ministers started coming and said, "We need to start this at our churches."

Within six months there were over 5000 prayer groups meeting everyday in N.Y. Soon the word spread all over the country. Prayer meetings were started in Philadelphia, Detroit, and Washington D.C. By 1859 some 15,000 cities in America were having downtown prayer meetings everyday at noon and thousands were won to Christ. But it started with one man with a burden.

Gypsy Smith, British Evangelist in the early 20th Century, believed the way to have a revival is to draw a circle on the floor, kneel inside the circle and pray, "Lord send a revival and let it begin inside this circle."

➡ Comments are welcome. [CLICK HERE](#).