

Praying for Spiritual Awakening

Lesson 05 of 05 in the series: "Prayer 30"

A. Spiritual awakening refers to believers waking up from dormancy or stagnation in their relationship with God.

"Awake, O sleeper, rise up from the dead, and Christ will give you light." Ephesians 5:14 (NLT)

"People will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money... lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God--having a form of godliness but denying its power... men will not put up with sound doctrine. Instead, to suit their own desires, they will gather around them a great number of teachers to say what their itching ears want to hear." 2 Timothy 3:2-5, 4:3 (NIV)

"You don't love me or each other as you did at first! ...Turn back to me..." Revelation 2:4-5 (NLT)

B. Praying for spiritual awakening means asking God to wake His people up and give them renewed love for Himself and others.

"It is time for you to act, O Lord, for they have regarded Your law as void." Psalm 119:126 (NKJV)

"Won't you revive us again, so your people can rejoice in you?" Psalm 85:6 (NLT)

"All the believers devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching, and to fellowship, and to sharing in meals (including the Lord's Supper), and to prayer. A deep sense of awe came over them all, and the apostles performed many miraculous signs and wonders. And all the believers met together in one place and shared everything they had. They sold their property and possessions and shared the money with those in need. They worshiped together at the Temple each day, met in homes for the Lord's Supper, and shared their meals with great joy and generosity -- all the while praising God and enjoying the goodwill of all the people. And each day the Lord added to their fellowship those who were being saved." Acts 2:42-47 (NLT)

1. Spiritually awakened Christians have a renewed desire to pray and study God's Word.

"My soul thirsts for God, for the living God. When can I go and meet with God?" Psalm 42:2 (NIV)

2. Spiritually awakened Christians have a renewed desire to be together with other believers.

"And let us not neglect our meeting together, as some people do, but encourage one another, especially now that the day of his return is drawing near." Hebrews 10:25 (NLT)

3. Spiritually awakened Christians have a renewed desire to do what's right and turn away from sin.

"Wake up, for our salvation is nearer now than when we first believed. The night is almost gone; the day of salvation will soon be here. So remove your dark deeds like dirty clothes, and put on the shining armor of right living. Because we belong to the day, we must live decent lives for all to see. Don't participate in the darkness of wild parties and drunkenness, or in sexual promiscuity and immoral living, or in quarreling and jealousy. Instead, clothe yourself with the presence of the Lord Jesus Christ. And don't let yourself think about ways to indulge your evil desires." Romans 13:11-14 (NLT)

4. Spiritually awakened Christians have a renewed burden for telling others about Jesus.

"Since, then, we know what it is to fear the Lord, we try to persuade men...For Christ's love compels us..." 2 Corinthians 5:11-14 (NIV)

5. Spiritually awakened Christians experience the Holy Spirit working in their lives.

"...the Holy Spirit produces this kind of fruit in our lives: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control." Galatians 5:22-23 (NLT)

C. A spiritual awakening would profoundly impact our community.

1. During a time of spiritual awakening, many non-Christians are convicted of sin.

"...when (the Holy Spirit) comes, he will convict the world of its sin, and of God's righteousness, and of the coming judgment." John 16:7-8 (NLT)

"We now have this light shining in our hearts, but we ourselves are like fragile clay jars containing this great treasure. This makes it clear that our great power is from God, not from ourselves."

2 Corinthians 4:6-7 (NLT)

2. During a time of spiritual awakening many non-Christians surrender their lives to Jesus.

“Peter’s words pierced their hearts, and they said to him and to the other apostles, ‘Brothers, what should we do?’ Peter replied, ‘Each of you must repent of your sins, turn to God, and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ to show that you have received forgiveness for your sins. Then you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.’ ...Those who believed what Peter said were baptized and added to the church that day—about 3,000 in all.” Acts 2:37-38, 41 (NLT)

D. How can I pray for spiritual awakening?

1. I can ask God to begin a spiritual awakening in me.

“Test yourselves to make sure you are solid in the faith. Don’t drift along taking everything for granted. Give yourselves regular checkups. You need firsthand evidence, not mere hearsay, that Jesus Christ is in you. Test it out. If you fail the test, do something about it.” 2 Corinthians 13:5 (MSG)

2. Together with other believers I can ask God to begin a spiritual awakening in our church, community, state, and nation.

“...if my people who are called by my name will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, I will hear from heaven and will forgive their sins and restore their land.”
2 Chronicles 7:14 (NLT)

3. I can keep praying.

“Do not despise these small beginnings, for the LORD rejoices to see the work begin...”
Zechariah 4:10 (NLT)

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Connect Group Questions:

1. Read Psalm 85:6. What thoughts come to mind when you hear the words “spiritual awakening” or “revival”?
2. Read 2 Timothy 3:2-5, 4:3-4. Do you think we live in times like these? Why? Why not?
3. Discuss the following ways a spiritual awakening can impact the lives of believers. Which of these items would you like to see most?
 - We have a renewed desire to pray and study God’s Word. (Psalm 42:2)
 - We have a renewed desire to be together with other believers. (Hebrews 10:25)
 - We have a renewed desire to do what’s right and turn away from sin. (Romans 13:11-14)
 - We have a renewed burden for telling others about Jesus. (2 Corinthians 5:11-14)
 - We experience the Holy Spirit working in their lives. (Galatians 5:22-23)
 - Many people surrender their lives to Christ because of the change they witness in the lives of their Christian friends. (1 Peter 2:12)
4. Read 2 Corinthians 4:6-7. How does it make you feel to hear Paul describe Christians as clay jars filled with the Holy Spirit? How should this understanding impact the way we live?
5. Discuss the following quotations:
 - “Revival begins when you draw a circle around yourself and make sure everything in that circle is right with God.” Anne Graham Lotz (see 2 Corinthians 13:5)
 - “All revival begins, and continues, in the prayer meeting... In times of revival, thousands may be found on their knees for hours, lifting up their heartfelt cries, with thanksgiving, to heaven.” Henry Blackaby (see 2 Chronicles 7:14)
6. Spend some time as a group praying together for spiritual awakening in our church, city, state, and nation. Use the Scriptures and discussion questions above to create a prayer list (i.e. “Lord, give everyone in our church a renewed desire to pray and study your Word.” from question #3)