

**Keys to**  
**Opening the**  
**Doors to Revival**

A Practical Manual to Revival Preparation

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# Keys to Opening the Doors to Revival

(The following are suggestions, not requirements, for scheduling a meeting.)

As a full-time evangelist, and a local church pastor for over thirty years, I have operated under a very simple principle:

## **Revivals work if you will work the revival.**

However, as we prepare ourselves for revival, please understand that no matter how much preparation is done, revival must come from God.

Charles Finney called revival "*A new beginning of obedience with God.*"

Simply stated, revival is the unique and extraordinary work of God done according to His sovereign and holy will.

Although the actual word "revival" does not occur in the Bible, verse after verse challenges us to a revived relationship with God. One where sin is confessed, wrongs are righted and our walk with God rekindled.

The following selections are just a few of the many verses that call us to revival.

*If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land.*

II Chronicles 7:14

*Wilt thou not revive us again; that thy people may rejoice in thee?*

Psalm 85:6

*And Samuel spake unto all the house of Israel, saying, If ye do return unto the Lord with all your hearts, then put away the strange gods and Ashtaroth from among you, and prepare your hearts unto the Lord, and serve him only; and he will deliver you out of the hand of the Philistines.*

I Samuel 7:3

*O Lord, I have heard thy speech, and was afraid; O Lord revive thy work in the midst of the years, in the midst of the years make known; in wrath remember mercy.*

Habakkuk 3:2

## **Revive Thy Work O Lord**

In the following pages I will introduce you to the Four Keys to Opening the Doors of Revival. I firmly believe that if these keys are followed and applied to your next revival meeting, it will be one of the best and most blessed meetings that you have ever experienced.

### **Four Keys to Opening the Doors to Revival**

## **PURPOSE**

### **Key One: The Purpose Is the Key to Passion**

If your church is to truly have revival, there must be a passion and excitement for the meeting. A "things as usual" status quo mentality will not cut it. The church must develop a white-hot passion for a fresh move of God.

Most pastors know this and would agree wholeheartedly. But how does the modern church develop such a passion in these busy days? Simply stated, the church must be taught the purpose of the revival. It can not be just another program or date on the calendar. Today, people must have a reason for their involvement.

*"Why should my family make an all-out effort for the revival?"*

First, revival *renews* the spiritual life of Christians. So many Christian lives are stuck in a rut today. The challenge and the thrill are gone. Here is an opportunity for them to get in on something fresh and new that God is doing.

Secondly, revival *reclaims* those who have wandered away from the church. This is a perfect opportunity to involve those dropout members with a place to plug in again. It affords the church a window to say we need you. Involve some of these folks and they might surprise you how quickly they return.

Next, revival *retains* the new Christians and members. By working on revival teams, these new people are giving and not just receiving. All the while they are making new friends and building relationships.

Finally, and most important, revival *redeems* the lost. It is a proven fact that when churches have revival meetings, the baptism records are higher for that year. People are still saved in revival meetings. Nothing will do a church more good than for a great number of lost people to be saved. It will refocus the heart of the church on evangelism once again.

We must join with the Apostle Paul when he said:

*My heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is that they might be saved.*

*Romans 10:1*

## **PASTOR**

### **Key Two: The Pastor Is the Key Priority**

It has been well stated, "Everything rises and falls on leadership." This is especially true when it comes to revivals. The revival will ride on the shoulder of the church's Pastor. Whatever his level of commitment and enthusiasm, the church will duplicate. A revival is not an event that the Pastor can delegate and then have minimal participation. Just like Jimmy Dean's Whole Hog Sausage, the Pastor must be "Whole Hog" committed.

First, the church must see the Pastor's *vision*. The people must see him out front, fully engaged, leading them. He should not, and can not, be a spectator. Rather, he should be involved as a full general. It is vital that he instill his vision into the hearts of the people to the point that it becomes their vision.

Secondly, they should hear the Pastor's *voice*. There should be no doubt as to the importance of the revival in the heart of the Pastor. He should use every opportunity from the pulpit, church newsletter article, and every other venue he has to promote the revival. Some people in the church will only respond to a request from the Pastor.

Finally, they should feel the Pastor's *vigor*. The Pastor should clear his schedule in the weeks prior to the revival so that it becomes a personal priority. He must transfer his energy into the lives of the people at prayer meetings, outreach events, and other pre-revival gatherings. An excited, enthusiastic Pastor will set the tone for the meeting.

## **PERSONNEL**

### **Key Three: The Personnel Are the Key Players**

Our society understands the concept of *Key Players*. The revival team will make a strong impact upon the revival. The following two areas will help in putting together the right team for the week.

First, let's talk about the *Building of the Team*. Who should choose the team? It is my strong, personal, conviction and practice that the Pastor should be the one to choose the team. The Pastor should be in tune with the heartbeat of the church and the Holy Spirit, and if that be the case, I believe God will lead Him to invite the right evangelist.

Should the Pastor feel led of the Holy Spirit, I would consider a great honor and personal privilege to be the evangelist to preach at your church.

The second consideration is the *Bringing of the Team*. There are some practical questions that should be answered prior to the team's arrival. In order to help avoid any miscommunication which the enemy could use to hurt or hinder the moving of God's Spirit during the revival meeting, let me simply ask and answer four questions.

"Where will the team stay?" In my personal experience, a local hotel is the best and most practical place for the team to stay. In the past, I have stayed in homes and prophet's chambers, but a hotel affords the privacy and atmosphere that is most desirable. However, this is simply personal preference, and is not a demand.

"What about meals during the revival?" The Pastor should host them, or if he cannot, then he should ask a member of the Hospitality Team. Sometimes the evangelist could be asked to eat at the hotel and then charge it to the room. This should not be done at every meal as it does not allow the evangelist to meet and minister to the pastor and his people. On a practical note, many evangelists do not eat prior to the service. So any pre-service activities such as pizza pig-outs, or hot dog suppers should not be considered their meal.

"How will the financial arrangements be handled for the revival?" There are many different policies and procedures when it comes to the matter of taking care of the evangelist's financial needs. That's why a clear, agreed upon, understanding should be in place well before the meeting begins. As stated previously, the church will follow the leadership of the pastor. That's why the Pastor should lead out in making sure that the finances of the revival are met. If a love offering is to be received, he should be the one to make the plea and not the evangelist. (In addition, it might be a good idea for the pastor to send a letter to the church body explaining and encouraging his church body to pray about and to prepare a love offering to bring with them to the meeting. A sample letter to the church family is provided at the end of this manual.) It is commonly agreed that travel and other expenses should not be taken out of the love offering. Also, if the evangelist has books or tapes to sell, if, when, where, when and how should be discussed and decided upon in advance of the meeting.

On another practical note pastor, the people will see how you treat the guest evangelist and will no doubt view this as a reflection of how you would like to be treated as a Man of God. If you are stingy and ungrateful, then your people will pick up on that message. It is never a mistake to err on the side of generosity.

"What does the evangelist do during the revival?" I believe that the evangelist's primary responsibilities during the revival are the evening services. If he gets worn out during the day as a result of being carted all over the country making visits, or simply held to the pastor's own, personal schedule, then the service will suffer. A good balance of play and work should be in place. Both the church and the pastor should understand the need for the evangelist to be at his best both spiritually and physically for the services.

# PLAN

## Key Four: The Plan Is the Key to Power

Empowerment is a much used word today. As we stated at the beginning of this manual, apart from the power of God, all that we do is in vain. So, how can we experience the power of God in the revival meeting? The key to the plan is *prayer power* and *people power*. If these two are in place, I believe that God's power will come.

First and foremost, the revival must be *Prayed Down*. II Chronicles 7:14 details the importance of prayer. Luke 18:1 says that "men ought always to pray." The revival meeting is a great place to focus your church on prayer. If you get your church to praying, then if nothing else happens, it was been worth the effort.

How can we focus the church to prayer? There are some practical approaches to getting the church on her knees. Look over the following suggestions:

1. Prayer Petitions
2. Small Group Prayer Meetings
3. Prayer Partners
4. 24 Hours of Prayer
5. Solemn Assembly
6. All Day Prayer
7. Noon Prayer Watch
8. One Minute at One O'clock (One on One)
9. Prayer Dot on Watch
10. Prayer Reminder for Breakfast Table
11. Altar Call with Prayer Cards of Lost Friends and Family

Perhaps you as the pastor can even come up with some other ideas that speak the unique personality of your church which would get your folks praying for and before the meeting.

Next, we must get the church *Packed Out*. Think about it, the more people you get involved, the better your revival will be. The reason is simple, a revival meeting is about people and their relationship to God. A revival affords you a new, fresh, exciting way to get many people involved in a short term project for the Kingdom. Try and think of every possible way to involve more people and pack out the church each service.

Put together a Pastor's Revival Team. This should be a leadership team with regular meetings beginning six to eight weeks prior to the revival. Divide it into these five areas of responsibility:

1. Prayer/Spiritual Preparation Team
2. Attendance Team
3. Counseling/Follow Up Team  
(use Commitment Counseling Guide)
4. Publicity Team

## 5. Hospitality Team

Each of these teams should meet regularly to fulfill their roles. Weekly meetings of all the teams with the pastor should be held to keep everyone working. Remember, people do what you inspect, not what you expect.

Letters should be written to each group in the church encouraging them to come and be a part. A letter from the team should be written to the leadership of the church (deacons, Sunday School, etc.).

Publicity should be handled by the Publicity Team and should include such things as fliers, billboards, newspaper ads, radio spots, and any other venue.

Special night emphasis has always helped boost attendance. Here are some suggestions.

1. High Attendance for Sunday School on opening Sunday
2. Pack the Pew Night
3. Family Night
4. Bring a Friend Night
5. Sunday School Night
6. Youth Night (pre-service pizza)
7. Children's Night (pre-service hot dogs)
8. Great Giveaway Sunday (prior to revival where everyone is given a packet of tracts to be given away as folks are invited to the revival.)

## **REVIVAL**

These are four practical, down to earth *Keys to Opening the Doors to Revival*. It is my prayer that as you use these concepts, the power of God will fall upon you and your work and that the blessings of God will spill over heaven in an abundance of which you have never dreamed. May God bless you as you build the Kingdom!

## **SUGGESTED PASTOR'S LETTER TO THE CHURCH FAMILY**

Dear Church Family,

Our coming revival (date) will be one of the most significant events in our church this year. God can do so much for us, our church and our community if we are faithful in revival efforts.

The evangelist leading our revival is (name of evangelist). Our music will be led by (name of music evangelist).

There will be a love offering received during each service. I have I enclosed a love offering envelope as you pray and prepare to give. As a church we want to give a worthy love offering.

As you invite your friends and neighbors to attend this revival, will you please provide the church with names of prospects you know?

May God give you and yours a special blessing in this revival.

(Pastor's choice of closing),

(Pastor's Name)

## **SUGGESTED PASTOR'S LETTER TO UNSAVED PROSPECTS**

Dear Friend,

Life's most important decision is to trust Christ as your personal Savior. My earnest prayer for you is that you become a follower of Jesus Christ.

Enclosed is a small booklet for you to read. I pray that you will commit your life to Christ and follow Him in baptism.

I am anxious to help you in any way. Will you attend our coming revival (date of revival)? The music will be led by (name of music evangelist) and the evangelist will be (name of evangelist).

I am praying for you.

(Pastor's choice of closing),

(Pastor's Name)

## LETTER TO PROSPECTS FROM THE EVANGELIST

Dear Friend,

I will be preaching in revival services at (name of church) Baptist Church on (date of revival). The pastor (name of pastor) has written me that you and your family have some ties with the church even though you are not members. It may be that you have visited the church recently, or perhaps you have some relative or friend who is a member of the church.

I would like to get to know you. The services will be held at (time) p.m. Please accept my invitation to attend every service.

If I can be of help to you in any way, please let me know.

May God bless you and your home.

(Evangelist's choice of closing),

(Name of Evangelist)

## **LETTER TO CHURCH MEMBERS FROM THE EVANGELIST**

Dear Friend,

I have looked forward to being with your church for revival services for some time. The revival begins next Sunday morning, and I am counting on you to be present for Sunday School and the morning and evening worship services. I have been praying that you will be responsible for someone's coming to profess Christ or moving his/her membership to your church on that day.

Please make every effort to be present each evening for the services. It means so much when people are in their place doing their part for the revival.

Please pray for me that I will be a faithful preacher of the Word of God. I will pray for you that you will be a faithful member of the church.

(Evangelist's choice of closing),

(Name of Evangelist)

# Example

## Pastor's Revival Countdown Calendar

| <b>Week</b> | <u>Sunday</u>   | <u>Monday</u>  | <u>Tuesday</u> | <u>Wednesday</u> | <u>Thursday</u> | <u>Friday</u> | <u>Saturday</u> |
|-------------|---|--|----------------|------------------|-----------------|---------------|-----------------|
| VI          | Enlist Pastor's Revival Team Members<br>Letter to Revival Team to finalize details (Evangelist and Musicians) |  |                |                  |                 |               |                 |
| V           | Meeting #1  | Promote Revival in bulletin and newsletter<br>Letter to Deacons to encourage involvement     |                |                  |                 |               |                 |
| IV          | Meeting #2  | Follow up any loose ends from Meeting #2<br>Letter to SS Leadership to encourage involvement |                |                  |                 |               |                 |
| III         | Meeting #3  | Follow up loose ends from Meeting #3   |                |                  |                 |               |                 |
| II          | Meeting #4  | Follow Up loose ends from Meeting #4<br>Church-wide letter to encourage involvement          |                |                  |                 |               |                 |
| I           | Meeting #5  | Follow Up loose ends from Meeting #5<br>Letter to prospects                                  |                |                  |                 |               |                 |
| <b>R</b>    |   |  |                |                  |                 |               |                 |
| <b>E</b>    |   |  |                |                  |                 |               |                 |
| <b>V</b>    |   |  |                |                  |                 |               |                 |
| <b>I</b>    |   |  |                |                  |                 |               |                 |
| <b>V</b>    |   |  |                |                  |                 |               |                 |
| <b>A</b>    |   |  |                |                  |                 |               |                 |
| <b>L</b>    |   |  |                |                  |                 |               |                 |

\*\* At the meetings with Revival Team have progress report time for each team assignment.  
Fill in details for week to week assignment.