

Repairing the Altar, Rebuilding the Foundation, Reclaiming the Culture of Corporate Prayer

"A genuine revival will come only by the fire of God from an open heaven, in answer to some soul or souls who dare to rebuild the altar of God and put the wood in order and place upon it a complete sacrifice, and trust God against all odds."—P. F. Bresee

I. Repairing the Altar and Rebuilding the Foundation of Corporate Prayer in the Church

Stages to Repairing the Altar

"Then Elijah said to all the people, "Come here to me." They came to him, and he repaired the altar of the LORD, which had been torn down."—1 Kings 18:30

1. **Centrality: Moving Prayer Back to the Center of the Life of the Church**
2. **Courage: Acknowledging the True Condition Caused by Prayerlessness**
3. **Corporate: Making Prayer an Intentional Corporate Practice that Involves Everyone**
4. **Critical: "Digging" in Prayer for Breakthrough**
5. **Consecration: The Cost and Sacrifice of Becoming a House of Prayer**
6. **Culture: Saturating the Atmosphere with Prayer**
7. **The Cry: The Heart of the Prayer Meeting**

Prayer that Repairs the Altar:

- * Revelation of God's Presence
- * Repentance of Corporate Sin

The Results of a Repaired Altar is Holy Spirit and Missional Activity:

1. **Fire (Testimonies of Holy Spirit Crisis, Cleansing and Consecration)**
2. **Rain (Testimonies of Restoration, Renewal and Growth)**

II. Reclaiming the Culture of Prayer

"They all joined together constantly in prayer, along with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brothers."—Acts 1:14

"It was a praying church. It was a church in which they prayed not merely occasionally, but where they all continued steadfastly...in the prayers.' (Acts 2:42) They all prayed, not a select few, but the whole membership of the church."

R. A. Torrey, "The Power of Prayer and the Prayer of Power"

The word "Culture" means **"the set of shared attitudes, values, goals, and practices that characterize an institution or organization"**.

What is the "Yeast" of the Kingdom?: The DNA of a Kingdom Culture

"God waits for the prayers of His children to bring in His Kingdom. The Lord's prayer is not just a model for me; it is a revelation of God's heart."
 Watchman Nee, "What Shall This Man Do?"

The Secret to Praying and Leading the Church to Pray the Lord's Prayer is found in the Beatitudes

The Beatitudes: The "Yeast" of a Kingdom Culture

Poverty- The Midnight Friends *"I have nothing" Cry (Luke 11)*

Mourning- *"How can the guests of the bridegroom mourn while he is with them? The time will come when the bridegroom will be taken from them; then they will fast."*—Matthew 9:15

Meekness- *"Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart..."*—Matthew 11:29

Hunger- *"Blessed are those who hunger now."* —Luke 6:21

Mercy- *"It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick: I desire mercy."*
 —Matthew 9:12-13

Purity- *"If you believe you will see the glory of God."* (John 11)

Peacemaking- *"Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you..."*—John 14:27

"The Sermon on the Mount has more to do with prayer than anything else."
 Watchman Nee, "What Shall This Man Do?"

The Culture created by Corporately Praying the Kingdom Prayer is the Beatitudes.

III. Leading the Church to Pray: Learning to Listen to the Holy Spirit

"The church doesn't need more leaders, it needs more followers. Teaching disciples to pray is teaching them to listen, to follow, and be like Jesus."—Hal Perkins

"Prayer leaders are scarce. Prayer conduct is not counted as the highest qualification for offices in the church. We cannot wonder that so little is accomplished in the great work in the world which God has in hand."

E. M. Bounds, *The Essentials of Prayer*

1. Learning to Listen and Be Led is the Key to Leading Prayer (Watching in Prayer)

"If God could lead the Israelites through the wilderness for 40 years, don't you think He could lead you through one prayer meeting?"—Jim Cymbala

2. Learning to Voice Worship (Shout to the Lord/Praise and Thanksgiving)

3. Learning to become Bold in Asking (Powerful Petitions/Agreement in Asking)

"It doesn't say, 'Let us come to the sermon.' We in America have made the sermon the centerpiece of church, something God never intended. Preachers who are really doing their job get people to come to the throne of grace. That's the true source of grace and mercy."—Jim Cymbala

4. Learning to Stand in the Gap for Others (Intercession is Loving the Lost)

Intercessory love for lost people is the focus, fuel, and foundation that sustains the Prayer Meeting.

5. Learning to Lean into God's Presence and Cry for More of the Holy Spirit (Presence-Driven is the Heart of Prayer Meeting)

6. Learning to Praise in Advance of the Answers (Praising is Praying with Faith)

Closing Conviction:

"If we call upon the Lord in prayer, he has promised in his Word to answer. If we don't call upon the Lord, he has promised nothing—nothing at all. It's as simple as that. No matter what we preach or what we claim to believe in our heads, the church's future depends upon our times of prayer as a church."

Jim Cymbala, Fresh Wind, Fresh Fire