

VISION FORWARD



BUT WHY REVIVAL?

This month we are engaging in a 40 day fast. Why 40? Oftentimes in the Bible “40” can signify something that is beyond the human capacity to endure or see through or accomplish. I don’t believe a 40 day fast is any more godly or Biblical than say a 20 or 30 day fast. But in the number 40 we are reminded that what we are praying for is beyond the wisdom and strength of any man, woman or people to produce or achieve.

Revival is such a thing. It cannot be produced, achieved, worked up, calculated, scheduled. Revival is the work of God and God alone. It comes directly by and under His sovereign hand. It arrives in His time and in His way.

In revival we see the work of God “expedited”. New spiritual life is imparted to the dead and new spiritual health is imparted to the living. We see God do extraordinary works at an extraordinary pace. It’s not that we see Him do something alien or foreign

to His character or His Word, but we witness His will being done on earth as in heaven with unprecedented power and speed.

One important part of revival is that we see salvation spring up from the ground (Isaiah 45:8). While we might as a church see 12 people come to faith in Christ over the course of 1-2 years, in revival we could see dozens, hundreds, even thousands. “And the Lord added to their number day by day those who were being saved.” (Acts 2:47)

Another important part of what God does in revival is to revive His church — waking her from her sleep, rescuing her from her passivity and idleness, convicting her of her sin and idolatry, confronting her in her lukewarmness or cold-heartedness, imparting fresh power and new spiritual life. The result is increased fire and zeal, praise and worship, repentance and transformation, preaching and good works.

In revival we very much get to “taste and see,” to experience and behold, God “rend the heavens and come down,” the mountains and the earth shaking before Him (Isaiah 64:1). It produces both awe and reverence in our midst and all around.

But we might ask, why? Why do we need revival? Is not God working in our midst already? Isn't what we're doing enough? Aren't we to be content as we are? The bottom line is, the kingdom of God is always advancing. The gates of hell will never prevail against the church. Yet, anyone living and longing for God, any church pursuing and seeking after Him, will NEVER be content to believe God is done moving, whether in the church or in the world. There will ALWAYS be a burning desire within to hear God speak, to see God move, to be cleansed as white as snow, to know more and more of the surpassing greatness of the love of God, to see the works of God recorded in Scripture and history being done in our day, to sense and to have a greater awareness of God's presence, to continually grow in holiness and Christlikeness, to see the spiritually dead come to life in Christ, etc.

There should never be within the heart of the church of Jesus Christ, nor in the heart of any disciple, the attitude of “I've seen enough. I've heard enough. I've done enough. I know enough of God.” In revival, the Spirit of God stirs up a cry in the depths of our heart for the earth to be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord.

So we are fasting and praying, Elim Grace, for revival, for God to do something in our day that will change the spiritual landscape of our city, county, and state. We are not being presumptuous, believing Elim Grace is the ONLY church God wants to visit and use in revival. May it NEVER be! But we most certainly want to be a part of it!

As Elim Grace, though, we do feel God calling us to pray for something in particular. We are fasting **40 days for a 40 year revival**. We have seen such a thing before some 300 years ago in the 18th century revival, a move of God that dramatically impacted Britain and the early American colonies. It's my conviction that God can do it again. So we are praying, not for a passing shower of God's presence, but for an abiding rain of God's presence, power, and Word on this portion of the earth. We are praying for a sustained sovereign move of God. We are praying for a revival that will last **an entire generation**. In doing so, we believe a generation

that is born and grows up in a season of revival can in turn be used of God to effect lasting change and transformation in our city, county, state, and beyond. Many want to give up on New York State and move on or move out. BUT WE WILL NOT. These are our boundaries, Elim Grace, the boundaries of our divine dwelling. Yes, New York State may be in great need of God's great mercy, but it is not BEYOND God's arm of salvation! Are there not one or two righteous who will lift up their voice to God for mercy on our land? For revival? Surely there are MORE than one or two within Elim Grace.

As we move together towards our fast, then, what will you fast? First, we must remember the focus of our fast is not on what we're giving up, be it food or anything else. **The focus of our fast is prayer: taking the time spent doing something and spending it in prayer to God instead.**

You may fast one meal a day. During that time you instead turn your attention to God in prayer. It may be a certain kind of food (ice cream, chips, soda, etc.) or distraction (tv, internet, video games, etc.) It may be social media. Whatever it is, take that time and give it in pursuit of God in prayer.

And join others. Fast together. Maybe gather at a home or a park. Go for a walk or hike. Meet at the church or via Zoom. There's strength and power when we gather with others in the same pursuit.

Also, maybe in fasting a meal or something that has had a financial cost, you take that money and at the end of our fast you give it to our benevolence fund to feed the hungry, reach the homeless, help the addict. Or give it to Victory Transformation, The Desens House, and/or Bridge To Hope.

Elim Grace, we are being called to “run with the horses” — we are being called to run with the Spirit. It will not be easy. It will not always be pleasant. It will be a fight. BUT GOD BY HIS SPIRIT will equip us, empower us, be with us. We CAN do this, because He HAS called us to it. A 40 day fast for a 40 year revival.

Let's join together in mind and heart and spirit—let's join the Spirit and together follow Him. Let's seek our God as one. Let's lift our intercession through Christ: “Not to us, O LORD, not to us, but to your name give glory, for the sake of your steadfast love and your faithfulness!” Psalm 115:1