

# PLEADING WITH SOUTHERN BAPTISTS

*To Humbly Come Together Before God in **Clear Agreement, Visible Union,**  
and in **Extraordinary Prayer** for the Next Great Awakening and for the World  
to Be Reached for Christ.*

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Dr. Ronnie Floyd

*I am so grateful to God for the life, ministry, and legacy of Jonathan Edwards. Even though I have read and studied much about him through the years, during the last eighteen months, our Lord has used Edwards' writing, "An Humble Attempt to Promote Explicit Agreement and Visible Union of God's People in Extraordinary Prayer for the Revival of Religion and the Advancement of Christ's Kingdom on Earth", to ignite a fresh burden in my heart for revival in the church and awakening in our nation, so the world may be reached for Christ. In the vein of his legacy, and now my burden, I present to you what I am calling "Pleading With Southern Baptists", and prayerfully, it will even go beyond our denomination.*

A handwritten signature in white ink on an orange background, reading "Ronnie Floyd". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Ronnie W. Floyd

President of the Southern Baptist Convention

November, 2014

# MY PLEA

**T**here is no great movement of God that has ever occurred that does not begin with the extraordinary prayer of God's people. The time is now for us to come together before God in clear agreement, visible union, and in extraordinary prayer for the next Great Awakening and for the world to be reached for Christ.

For the sake of our nation and the spiritually lost around the world, it is time to humble ourselves before God. For this, I plead with all Southern Baptist pastors, missionaries, laypersons, denominational leaders, churches, denominational entities, conventions, colleges and universities; from student to adult, regardless of age, vocation, or status.

As we come to God in humility and repentance, entering into this special season of extraordinary prayer, we plead with God for spiritual revival personally, revival in the church, and the next Great Awakening in the United States. As Martyn Lloyd-Jones writes:

*“And in movements of the Spirit the first thing that happens and which eventually leads to a great revival is that one man or a group of men suddenly begin to feel this burden and they feel the burden so much that they are led to do something about it.”*

*Revival: Martyn Lloyd-Jones, p. 163*

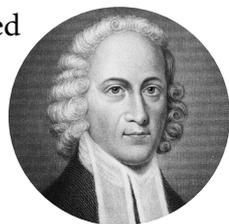


I am pleading with each of you to join in this spiritual movement to pray for the next Great Awakening so the Great Commission will escalate to its rightful priority and accelerate to its completion in our generation.

*When they had  
prayed, the place where they  
were assembled was shaken, and  
they were all filled with the Holy  
Spirit and began to speak God's  
message with boldness.  
**Acts 4:31 (HCSB)***

# A LOOK BACK

**J**onathan Edwards was a man who believed in the absolute sovereignty of God. He was the catalyst for the first Great Awakening and was even impactful in the second Great Awakening. Even with Edwards' deep abiding belief in God's sovereignty, he called upon God's people to act because he believed God would listen to the promptings of His people.



In fact, Malcolm McDow and Alvin L. Reid's [Firefall 2.0: How God Shapes History Through Revival](#) (Wake Forest: Gospel Advance Books, 2014), p. 207, they record the words that Edwards wrote to pastors directly:

*“Be much in prayer and fasting, both in secret and with one another. It seems to me, it would become the circumstances of the present day, if ministers in a neighborhood would often meet together, and spend days in fasting and fervent prayer among themselves.... So it is God's will that the prayers of His saints shall be great and the principal means of carrying on the designs of Christ's Kingdom in the world. When God has something to accomplish for His church, it is with His will that there should precede it the extraordinary prayer of His people.”*

Therefore, as we look back, we must fully embrace the deep belief that God responds to the prayers of His people, especially when these prayers are cried out to Him in desperation and done in an extraordinary way. Evidence is becoming clearer nationally that God is calling His people into a season of special focus and commitment to extraordinary prayer.

It has been over 100 years since the last great move of God occurred in our nation. It was in 1857 and 1858 that a movement of prayer led to **1 million people becoming Christ-followers** from a population of only 30 million in our nation. This movement of prayer was begun in New York City by a layperson named Jeremiah Lanphier. After failing to minister effectively to the immigrants in his church's neighborhood, Lanphier was moved to pray.



At noon on September 23, 1857, in the Dutch Reformed Church on Fulton Street in New York City, Jeremiah Lanphier knelt alone. Before 1 p.m. six men joined him. Within a month, 100 men joined him daily. Soon, thousands of men began to pray each day at noon around New York City. This resulted in 1 million Americans

coming to Christ within a two-year span, as well as another 1 million converted to Christ in Great Britain and Ireland.

The church was revived. Christians were never the same. The fires of evangelism were burning brightly.

The advance of the gospel to the nations of the world was profound.

Men like David Livingstone, J. Hudson Taylor, and eventually the Student

*Evidence is becoming clearer nationally that God is calling His people into a season of special focus and commitment to extraordinary prayer.*

Volunteer Movement saw 20,000 young people surrender their lives to missions. Additionally, these great movements of God impacted renowned men of history like Charles Spurgeon, D. L. Moody, and William Booth.



These were not perfect times. Simultaneously, tension over slavery was growing and financial panic was occurring. In this time of uncertainty, God's people became desperate and began to cry out to Him. The Sovereign God of Heaven determined to pour out His Spirit in a supernatural way, resulting in one of the greatest movements of God in the history of our nation.

While it has been over 100 years since the last great movement of God upon our nation, we cannot ignore the moments when the Lord has still moved upon our nation powerfully. For example, in the early 1970s, the Jesus Movement touched a generation, including many of our leaders today. **Through this work of God, thousands came to Christ, followed by many of them being called into ministry.** The greatest year of reaching and baptizing teenagers in our Southern Baptist history occurred in 1972, all due to the influence of the Jesus Movement. While not a “great” awakening, many joyfully remember the work of God in those days.

Sadly, we now have a generation or more of people who have never experienced anything close to a movement of God with this level of impact. It is past time for this to change. God is ready, are we?



# OUR PRESENT STATUS

Unquestionably, we find ourselves experiencing days unlike any we have seen in our history. The moral slide in our nation has degraded into a revolution that seems to be out of control. While marriage is being redefined by our culture and the family is under an unprecedented attack, social problems are rising everywhere due to this new cultural reality. Simultaneously, there are so many national and global crises rising up that we cannot keep up with their supposed threats. As well, the world is becoming more dangerous by the second.

While this present status is undeniable, much of the church in America sleeps. Spiritual lukewarmness is plaguing the church, resulting in the infrequency of church attendance, declining churches, lagging evangelism, sagging giving, and generational disconnectedness. Complacency and conflict categorize the church more than contrition and compassion. Among the people of God, announcements and promotions within the church gain a higher priority in planning and follow through than prayer.

*Complacency and conflict categorize the church more than contrition and compassion.*

While these realities are rising to a seeming point of no return, it is in this hour that we must wake up from our slothfulness and sleep. Romans 13:11 says,

*“Besides this, knowing the time, it is already the hour for you to wake up from sleep, for now our salvation is nearer than when we first believed.”*

We are at a decisive point in time. Therefore, this is an undeniable moment and season, fixed by a sovereign God as a moment of destiny. God is at work and we cannot miss this season of decision and opportunity by being unresponsive and asleep.

# A CALL TO EXTRAORDINARY PRAYER AND URGENT ACTION

**T**he church must rise up in extraordinary prayer and urgent action. We must take desperate steps forward spiritually during these desperate times in which we live. With urgency in this hour, knowing the Lord could return at anytime, it is incumbent on us to rise up together now as His Church.

Therefore, I am pleading with our Southern Baptist Family to come together in clear agreement, visible union, and extraordinary prayer for the next Great Awakening and for the world to be reached for Christ.

Recently, I read a [sermon](#) by Dr. Billy Graham that he preached on October 14, 1993, at the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. In this sermon, “[Can Revival Come?](#)”, Dr. Graham called for revival and awakening. In one sentence, he cast a vision that represents my overwhelming passion personally and for all Southern Baptists. He said,

“*An awakening can bring about evangelization of the world in our generation.*”

These words so resonate with my pleading with Southern Baptists and beyond.

Surely we can embrace with clear agreement that spiritual revival personally, spiritual revival in the church, and spiritual awakening in the nation are all needed so we can accelerate our pace in reaching the world for Christ. Certainly we can deny ourselves, defer our own preferences, and visibly unite in extraordinary prayer for the next Great Awakening and for the world to be reached for Christ.

With conviction in this desperate hour, I want to call us to consider some unprecedented actions in our modern history that will move us into a season of extraordinary prayer as a convention of churches.

## ACTION 1 – SUNRISE/SUNSET



Challenge your church to pause at either sunset on Saturday evening or sunrise on Sunday morning, to pray for three minutes for the anointing of God to come on their pastor as he preaches God's Word and the anointing of God's power to come upon the worship services of their church. Prayerfully, these 180 seconds of focused prayer will soon begin a true 180-degree change in our churches. While God creates the change within our churches spiritually, He will also lead us to strategic change in our churches in order to rise up like never before to do whatever it takes to reach people with the gospel of Jesus Christ regionally, nationally, and internationally.

## ACTION 2 – MONTH OF PREACHING



Between the months of January and May 2015, move into a one-month emphasis in your church to teach and preach God's Word on the subjects of repentance, extraordinary prayer, revival, awakening,

and reaching the world for Christ. Extend passionate calls to your people about each of these topics individually and collectively. During this same time period, we would ask those who lead staff teams and chapels of our Baptist entities, conventions, seminaries, and colleges to consider this same emphasis. For a collection of sermons on these subjects, provided by several SBC pastors, [go here](#). Use or quote from these inspiring sermons as God leads you.

## ACTION 3 – SUNDAY MORNING PRAYER



On one Sunday in this same period of time between January and May 2015, dedicate an entire worship service or services to extraordinary prayer for spiritual revival, the next Great Awakening, and for the world to be reached for Christ. For a closer look at how to do this, perhaps my article, [Leading Your Church in a Sunday Morning Prayer Meeting](#), will be of assistance. [Here are additional](#) prayer-focused Sunday morning services led by pastors from across the country. Perhaps these will encourage you to lead forward in this initiative.

## ACTION 4 – 1 DAY OF PRAYER & FASTING IN MAY



In the month of May, we call upon every Southern Baptist to spend a day in prayer and fasting for spiritual revival personally, revival in the church, spiritual awakening in America, for the completion of the Great Commission in our generation, and for our upcoming annual meeting in Columbus, Ohio, June 16-17, 2015. For a closer look at fasting and how you can lead your church in a corporate fast, [go here](#).

# ACTION 5 – CALL TO COLUMBUS



[Join us in Columbus, Ohio](#), on Tuesday evening, June 16, 2015, as we commit the entire evening session of the annual meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention to come together in clear agreement and visible union at one place at one time with God's people. We will unite in extraordinary prayer for spiritual revival personally, spiritual revival in the church, for the next Great Spiritual Awakening, and for the world to be reached for Christ.

Therefore, in Jesus' name, I plead with Southern Baptists to humbly come together before God in clear agreement, visible union, and extraordinary prayer for the next Great Awakening and for the world to be reached for Christ.

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# OTHER RESOURCES

Go to [pray4awakening.com](http://pray4awakening.com) and embrace the vision of seeing thousands of Southern Baptists pray regularly for the next Great Awakening in the United States and for the world to be reached for Christ.

***AWAKE: The Call To A Renewed Life*** is a six-week series for any small group, whether meeting on Sunday morning or another time during the week at a church, in the home, or another location. A version of this study will be available in March 2015, and will be included in LifeWay's 2015 Summer [Bible Studies for Life](#) curriculum series.

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## **Firefall 2.0: How God Has Shaped History Through Revivals**

*Malcom McDow and Alvin L. Reid*

*Wake Forest: Gospel Advance Books, 2014*

## **Jesus, Continued...: Why the Spirit Inside You is Better than Jesus Beside You**

*J. D. Greear*

*Zondervan Publishers*

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## America: Turning a Nation to God

*Tony Evans*

*Moody Publishers, January 2015*

## The Power of Prayer and Fasting (Revised and Expanded)

*Ronnie W. Floyd*

*Broadman and Holman Publishers*

## Prayer and Revival

*J. Edwin Orr*

*www.jedwinorr.com*

Visit [pray4awakening.com/southernbaptists](http://pray4awakening.com/southernbaptists) for more sermons and resources.

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Dr. Ronnie Floyd has been a pastor for over 38 years. Since 1986, Pastor Floyd has served as the Senior Pastor of Cross Church, Northwest Arkansas. In June 2014, Dr. Floyd was elected President of the Southern Baptist Convention. Pastor Floyd has authored 20 books including *The Power of Prayer and Fasting, revised and expanded*, *10 Things Every Minister Needs to Know*, and *Our Last Great Hope: Awakening the Great Commission*. His next book, *FORWARD: 7 Distinguishing Marks For Future Leaders*, will be released in Spring, 2015. You can find Dr. Floyd on:



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