



**SAMPLE:**  
FIRESEEDS OF SPIRITUAL  
AWAKENING

REVISED EDITION

# FIRESEEDS

*Of Spiritual Awakening*

*dan HAYES*

AUTHOR

FOREWORD BY  
MARK GAUTHIER

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# NOTES ON THE REVISION

*As this book has had a great influence on my prayer and expectancy over the years, it has been a privilege to work on the revised manuscript. The revisions to *Fireseeds* fall into four general categories.*

First, we sought to widen the focus of the book from the revivals and campuses of the U.S. to those of the world. This was at times a daunting task, the challenge lying in the absence of written histories, not an absence of spiritual activity.

Second, we included examples of more current movements of God's Spirit, as a great deal has happened in the last two decades relating to prayer and revival.

Third, where appropriate, we also made note of the role of women in these revivals, since their contribution is sometimes overlooked.

And, last, we concluded the book with an additional chapter that provides anyone and everyone with the opportunity to be filled with the Spirit and experience renewal in their walk with the Lord. We cannot control when God brings revival, but we can control whether we are filled and walking with His Spirit.

My excitement for this book stems from my belief that the ideas it contains are even more significant now than when it was first written.

In 1747 Jonathan Edwards wrote a small book to encourage prayer, entitled *A Humble Attempt*. It was his hope that the book would further fuel the Great Awakening in which he was involved. It didn't, at least not significantly. Instead, due to a 1789 reprinting, the book found its audience and spurred another revival (the Second Great Awakening) a full generation after it was written.

In much the same way, I believe we are the generation that God ultimately intended this book for, and that is the heart and faith behind this revision and reprint.

Sincerely,  
Rick James  
Publisher, Cru Press

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# FOREWORD

*Accounts of the First and Second Great Awakenings*, and the movements that were birthed by them, have always inspired me. The interest was born in me during my time in ministry in Boston. Perhaps it was walking the same roads that men like Jonathan Edwards traveled that did it. Perhaps it was reading the many inscriptions etched into the stone of the churches in New England that testified to the transformation wrought by Edwards' call to prayer and fully surrendered lives. Of course there were the excursions to Williams College in western Massachusetts where the Student Volunteer Movement had its roots in an impromptu prayer meeting. But most profoundly, my great interest in all these movements of God was established by the experience of working daily with the college students of New England and recognizing in them their great potential, and envisioning how the Lord could use students again.

*Fireseeds* is a book of stories—stories of how God has worked in and through generations past. All over the globe and for thousands of years, God has been at work in His people of every tongue, tribe and nation for His glory. Many of those inspiring stories are recounted here. But *Fireseeds* is more than stories, as powerful as they are. Within this book you will find a compelling vision for how God can transform your life, your campus, and your world.

The first time I read this book, God used it to move me to greater surrender and more fervent prayer. He wooed me into a bigger vision for how He wanted to work in and through my life. And as He worked through this book in the lives of others around me, it translated into radical change in my community and on our campuses.

This book has been reprinted and updated because it contains a message for this generation. This message is a call to prayer, to surrender and to action that I believe God will use to fuel movements among the students of the world.

It will be these movements, characterized by students who seek God with all their hearts, who call on Him to change their realities, and who step out in faith with the Gospel, that will ultimately and radically transform our world.

I leave you with the prayer of Habakkuk in his book, chapter 3, verse 2: “Lord, I have heard of your fame; I stand in awe of your deeds, O Lord. Renew them in our day, in our time make them known; in wrath remember mercy.”

Mark Gauthier

National Director, U.S. Campus Ministry

# INTRODUCTION

*Dr. Charles Malik, one of the architects of the United Nations, asserted in a speech at Wheaton College that “once [a person] realizes that Jesus Christ would find Himself less at home on the campuses of the great universities of Europe and America than almost anywhere else, he will be profoundly disturbed, and he will inquire what can be done to recapture the great universities for Jesus Christ, the universities which would not have come into being in the first place without Him.”<sup>1</sup>*

That is what this book is about: recapturing colleges and universities—not through political action but through campus spiritual awakening.\* There are available to Christian collegians more joy, more power, more challenge, and more significance than they have ever imagined.

God is beginning to draw a spiritual force of students from all corners of the world, a movement that will, by God’s grace, obliterate the apathy, purposelessness, and spiritual malaise that have afflicted our campuses for years.

Spiritual awakening can come to our colleges and universities, and it may come soon. This book is written



to help us get on board, to get caught in the joyous jet stream of God's Spirit as He sweeps across and through the campuses of the world.

In these pages can be found the motivation, perspective, methods, and results of massive spiritual stirrings in our residence halls, fraternities, sororities, athletic teams, and classes.

My prayer is that we might be stirred, motivated, and instructed to lay the foundations for spiritual revolution in the home and halls of academia. If we expect it, follow the principles outlined here, and don't quit, we will see it happen.

\*It has happened before and God can bring it again in an even more powerful action of His Spirit, sweeping movements everywhere into the torrent of spiritual awakening. May we not miss the chance to cooperate with Him in helping university communities know personally the very Incarnation of Truth Himself, Jesus Christ.

# LET'S TURN THE COLLEGE CAMPUS RIGHT SIDE UP

*“God’s concern is worldwide. How the church has responded to that mandate is also clear in the light of history. All too frequently the Church has fallen into lethargy in relation to its world-wide obligations. But God does not leave Himself without a witness. Whether it be a Nicolas Von Zinzendorf, a Samuel Mills, a C. T. Studd, a Robert Wilder, a John Mott, a Jim Elliot or a hundred others who could be named, God singles out a man to prophesy to His church. And with remarkable frequency that man has been a student.”*

*– David Howard<sup>1</sup>*

*Out of the 17 million college students in the U.S. (90 million worldwide), a growing number of freshmen would identify themselves as being Christians, by which they sincerely mean “Christ followers,” not “Our family has a Christmas tree instead of a Hanukkah bush.” Yet, however you want to quantify it, or whatever metric you use, this growing number has not translated into a growing influence for*

Christ. On most campuses our heads rarely rise above sea level to be recognized as anything more than another club or subculture, listed in the student activities manual under “Christian Groups,” sandwiched between “Chess Club” and “Cross-Country.” It would be more accurate to say that we, who ought to be the salt of the earth, have instead become its vanilla extract.

As I move from campus to campus, I look for revolutionary Christians who will stand up and say they are committed to living for Christ, no matter what the cost and no matter what they might have to sacrifice. But it is hard to find such Christians. I’ve been to more worship services than I can count, and I’ve heard students voice vehement conviction in the lyrics of their praise. I just don’t see the follow-through. And I’ve been in the follow-through business. When students said they wanted to go and serve Christ around the world, I’ve set up the trips and witnessed firsthand the discontinuity between the worshiping multitudes who claim “I’ll sing your praises to the world” and the handful who actually get on a plane.

Well, it wouldn’t take much effort to keep things on autopilot and continue to grind out mediocrity. But let’s not. Instead, I want you to pause and honestly ask yourself: Is there revolutionary Christianity on my campus? Is there an immense amount of spiritual power being released where I attend college?

First Corinthians 4:20 has exploded like a bomb in my mental and spiritual life. It says, “The kingdom of God does not consist in words but in power” (NASB), meaning, unlike every other human club or activity, the Christian life is not defined by its terminology (saying or singing the right words), nor can it be reduced to a program (doing the right activities). The Christian life is primarily about spiritual transformation through spiritual power, manifested in spiritual community—a work of God’s power, not ours.

In light of 1 Corinthians 4:20, here are the questions to

ask if you want to diagnose the spiritual vitality of your Christian group on campus: Is spiritual power being manifested in answered prayer? Is there spiritual power at work, leading others to Christ and energizing students to witness? Is there spiritual power to resist temptation and overcome evil? Is there spiritual power to move others for God and move God down to us through prayer? Is there spiritual power to disciple others in a way that is life changing? Is there spiritual power to love enemies, to pray for them, to do good for them, and to draw them to Christ? Is supernatural power being exerted?

On most campuses the honest answer to those questions would be that the evidence of supernatural, life-transforming power is severely lacking.

### **Living with Impotence**

When we look at life on campus, what we see are students immersed in sexual relationships, enslaved to pornography, and obsessed with dating (appearance, exercise, clothes, and so on). That's not some finger-wagging accusation but simply a statement of fact; the majority of those engaged in this sexualized lifestyle lack the capacity to withdraw even if they desired to. Against this backdrop I wish I could say that Christians stand as shining beacons of purity, but you and I both know that's not true. The degree to which, and the percentage to which, Christians struggle with these issues are not remarkably different from those for nonbelievers. Not only is there missing power to fight such temptation, but our sexual dalliances drain us of the limited spiritual reserves we do have. Lust, sex, and pornography have diluted and neutralized our spiritual power.

When there is a lack of spiritual vitality, joy, and zeal, Christianity drifts toward legalism: adherents define themselves by what they don't do rather than by what they do and what they are—Christ followers. The result is that on many campuses we are not perceived as a radical

community of transformed individuals but as the local “abstinence club,” refraining from all activities fun and enjoyable and judges of those who participate.

Many are straddling the fence for Jesus Christ, with one foot in the world and one foot in the kingdom. One student volunteered, “I’m not sitting on the fence. I’m lying on top of it.” We lack the spiritual power to immunize us to the heart disease of materialism, choking off our souls like arteries clogged with mayonnaise. We smuggle in the American dream, cleverly packaged in Christian/family verbiage to avoid guilt detection—going in quest of a Christian spouse, Christian house, Christian car (fish on the bumper), Christian computer (Bible verse screensaver), parental and peer approval, financial security, and travel. Dress it up in Sunday church clothes, but it’s still the American dream: the pursuit of happiness ... materialism.

This may seem harsh, but as you look around, it seems Christians have done the one thing to Christianity that even Christ’s enemies could not do. Christ’s enemies scourged Him, mocked Him, beat Him, tried Him falsely, hung Him on a cross, jammed a crown of thorns on His head, stuck a spear in His side, and finally sealed Him in a stone-cold tomb. Centuries after His resurrection, His enemies denied that He ever existed. But with all this, we Christians have dealt Christ a more damaging blow. We have not killed Him, but we have made Him boring.

### **Our Need for Power**

I don’t say any of this as an alarmist, pessimist, or cynic. Lamenting our witness, critiquing the Christian subculture, or berating our failures does none of us any good. In fact, I’m rather optimistic: I truly believe that we could have an impact for Christ beyond anything we have ever experienced. But the journey toward that destination must begin with truthful analysis. It does not begin with our Christian witness as we would like it to be, or wish it were,

but as it is currently being lived out on campus—clearly with a lack of spiritual power.

Several million Christian college students around the world have a desperate need for power, holiness, and New Testament vitality to characterize their lives. The changing of these students' lives would have a profound impact on the millions who do not know Christ, no doubt resulting in the entrance of hundreds of thousands into the kingdom. We must ask, then, what is the solution to our spiritual impotence?

In reality there are a number of things. But the most comprehensive answer, the one I'm proposing in this book, is that what we need, what we really want and long to see, is revival and awakening on our campuses and in our lives—a holy fire bringing heaven down to earth. We long, as the prophet Habakkuk did, to see and experience God's power: "Lord, I have heard of your fame; I stand in awe of your deeds, O Lord. Renew them in our day, in our time make them known" (Habakkuk 3:2).

Would it not be amazing to see God renew His awesome deeds in our day? I'm not sure what that would look like, but—oh, God!—what I would give to see it. And deep within my heart, I honestly believe we are going to see it, if we will meet God's conditions for revival. I believe God wants to move across the world's six thousand-plus campuses, sweeping them up into a holy fire, causing believers to get off the fence and live passionately for Him and bringing multitudes of new believers into His kingdom. I think He wants to take the inverted university world and turn the entire system right side up.

But before delving deeper into the subject of campus revival, we need to answer two flagrant questions: What is revival? And why is the university so important?

### **Why the Campus?**

There is a tendency to think of campus ministry as a youth

group: a cozy support structure for Christians temporarily transposed from home and church. And while it certainly is a support structure, that's a little like saying that the most important application on a personal computer is the calculator.

Campus ministry was not the unique idea or vision of any individual. Rather, it is a ministry and mission strategy based on an observation that throughout recent history the university has been God's primary vehicle for expanding His kingdom and spreading the gospel to the world. Given that the university is highly secular, arrogant, and atheistic, one would assume that the gospel would have detoured the university altogether. It didn't. It barreled through like a truck, turning a gauntlet into a highway for God's global plan of redemption—so much for assumptions.

In his recent book *The American Evangelical Story*, church historian Douglas Sweeney demonstrates that modern biblical or evangelical Christianity is a river fed from four major sources (besides, obviously, the Scriptures).<sup>2</sup>

The first of these sources was the Reformation of the early sixteenth century, when reformers such as Luther, Zwingli, and Calvin jostled with the feudal decadence and doctrine of the medieval church. And where did this movement originate? The campus. It was mounted and mobilized from the universities of Wittenberg, Geneva, Zürich, and Toulouse (among others) before disbursing to the masses.

Then came the Puritans in the early seventeenth century. A spiritual reform movement that would proliferate their teaching and train their leaders through the establishment of colleges such as Yale, Harvard, and Dartmouth.

Harvard's original stated purpose for its students was "To be plainly instructed and consider well that the main end of your life and studies is to know God and Jesus Christ." One requirement of students was this: "Everyone shall so exercise himself in reading the Scriptures twice a day that he shall be able to give an account of his proficiency therein."

One of Yale's requirements for its students read as follows: "Seeing that God is the giver of all wisdom, every student, besides his private and secret prayer, will be present morning and evening for public prayer."

The third source was the Pietists of the mid seventeenth century. Though relatively unknown today, this spiritual renewal movement was birthed in the German universities of Leipzig, Württemberg, and Halle. It bequeathed to the Christian world the prayer movement (the Moravians), small-group Bible study, mass printing and distribution of the Bible, and modern missions. And let's throw in the conversion of John Wesley while were at it.

The last major source of modern evangelical faith is the awakenings and revivals of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Like their distant grandchild, the Billy Graham crusades of the twentieth century, these meetings brought together believers from many denominations for the purpose of evangelism and spiritual renewal. These awakenings spread across the college campuses, and it was through student missionaries and organizations (such as the Student Volunteer Movement) that these revivals were exported to the world.

Do you see the centrality of the campus, the common thread that weaves through and stitches together God's redemptive movements in modern history? Well, just in case, let's consider two examples.

*The Global Awakening and the Student Volunteer Movement*

In 1886 the first-ever Christian conference for college students was held at Mount Hermon, Massachusetts. On Friday evening, the last day of the conference, 250 students were given a challenge by Princeton senior Robert Wilder to consider taking the gospel to the world as foreign missionaries. One by one, students came forward to accept the challenge—a hundred students from schools such as Yale, Harvard, Dartmouth, and Cornell. As a symbol



of their commitment, students signed a pledge, which simply read, “We the undersigned, declare ourselves willing and desirous, God permitting, to go to the unevangelized portions of the world.”

Seeing God’s hand at work, Wilder spent the next year feverishly traveling to over 150 campuses, giving the same challenge, and seeing an additional 2,100 sign the pledge. And this was only the beginning. For over fifty years, graduating seniors would pour from the Student Volunteer Movement to the far corners of the earth—a total of 20,500 missionaries, the largest single missionary endeavor in the history of the church.<sup>3</sup>

In 1948 the Student Volunteer Movement splintered. It had become liberal in its theology, and its evangelistic core, feeling increasingly unwelcome, was forced out. They joined up with a newly formed college ministry and began holding yearly mission conferences in Urbana, Illinois. The group is known as InterVarsity, and it was soon joined by Campus Crusade for Christ and other campus ministries—a whole new missionary enterprise once again springing from the campus and flowing out to the world.

#### *Wesley, Whitefield, and the First Great Awakening*

It was at Oxford University, in the early 1730s, that John and Charles Wesley, along with two other students, began to meet together three or four evenings a week to pray, fast, study Scripture, and discuss their spiritual lives. Over the next few years the community grew, running in size between ten and fifteen students and notably attended by George Whitefield. The group became known on campus as the Holy Club, which carried with it the same sardonic connotations the label would carry today.

While there is much more to the story, we’ll fast-forward to New Year’s Day of 1739. John and Charles Wesley, George Whitefield, several other members of the Holy Club, and about sixty other like-minded believers held a “love feast,”

which may or may not have been a corny name even for back then. Later Wesley gave this account of what followed:

About three in the morning, as we were continuing in prayer, the power of God came mightily upon us, insomuch that many cried out for exceeding joy, and many fell to the ground (overcome by the power of God). As soon as we recovered a little from the awe and amazement at the presence of His majesty, we broke out with one voice, "We praise Thee, O God; we acknowledge thee to be Lord."<sup>4</sup>

It was on this evening that God gave these men the deep assurance that He was going to do something beyond all measure and expectation. A week later, at the age of twenty-two, Whitefield was ordained, and shortly after he gave his first sermon outdoors in Kingswood, England (a rather barbaric mining town). His first message was preached to two hundred people. The next day, five thousand returned. The day after, twenty thousand mobbed to hear him. At times the entire mass wept with conviction.<sup>5</sup> "White gutters made by tears plentifully fell down their black cheeks as they came from the coal pits."<sup>6</sup> The movement of God's Spirit had begun, and the world would never be as it was before.

Let's forget for a minute about Charles Wesley and the eight thousand hymns he composed that led the planet in worship for a couple centuries and just focus on the ministries of John Wesley and George Whitefield.

Wesley started the Methodist movement, which became the evangelistic pulse of America. When he died, there were already 120,000 committed members (now 20 million). He preached to millions and saw thousands come to Christ. If you wonder how that's humanly possible, it's because he preached an estimated 46,000 sermons, traveling 226,000 miles on horseback. Oh, and he wrote four hundred books

and pamphlets, usually in transit.

George Whitefield, on the other hand, preached a mere 18,000 sermons—a real slacker! But Whitefield was the pioneer of outdoor preaching (it was previously unheard of to give a sermon outside a church), and being blessed with a megaphone for a voice, he was able to make up the 28,000-sermon surplus of his friend John Wesley, with crowds that swelled as high as 30,000. It is estimated that he preached the gospel to some two million listeners.

They were stoned, punched, and screamed at, and they traveled to exhaustion, and yet everywhere they went, revival followed. Along with Jonathan Edwards, these men *were* the First Great Awakening—humanly speaking, that is. And it began as a Bible study at Oxford University.

#### *A Chosen Vessel*

In hindsight we could posit any number of reasons why God has used the campus as His vehicle for accelerating the spread of the gospel. Perhaps it's due to the zeal and radical nature of college students, evident in student uprisings and protests. Or perhaps it is the unique community that exists on campus, where students can meet day or night for prayer and fellowship. And then there is the viral campus culture that causes ideas, trends, messages, and fads to spread like germs from one campus to the next. Or it could be because the university represents the most influential percentage of the population. (Though the university comprises only 1 percent of the world's population, almost every military, political, religious, athletic, and cultural leader will arise from the student population.)

Whatever the reason, we clearly observe the importance of the college campus in God's global plans and surmise that if revival is to break out again, there is a great likelihood that it will be on the campus, as it has been historically, and that the results of such a revival today would be nothing short of the fulfillment of the Great Commission.

### **What Is Revival?**

I can't remember the exact image that came to my mind the first time I heard the word "revival," but I'm pretty sure it involved a banjo or a snake handler or a faith healer or something like that. This is not revival, though it may assume the name "revival meeting." Perhaps the following eyewitness account of the Pyeng Yang, Korea, revival of 1907 would be the best way to introduce us to revival.

The room was full of God's presence ... a feeling of God's nearness impossible to describe. The whole audience began to pray. ... It was not many, but one, born of one Spirit, lifted to one Father above. ... God came to us in Pyeng Yang that night. ... Man after man would arise, confess his sin, break down and weep. Some threw themselves full length on the floor; hundreds stood with arms outstretched towards heaven. Every man forgot each other. Each was face to face with God.

Everywhere the story was told the same Spirit flowed forth and spread. All through the city men were going from house to house, confessing to individuals they had injured, returning stolen property and money. The whole city was stirred.<sup>7</sup>

Charles Finney, an evangelist of the nineteenth century who was responsible for helping much of America find revival, said, "Revival is nothing more than renewed zeal to obey God." It is renewed desire to be obedient to the God who made us and who always makes plans for our welfare. Individuals are changed and begin to move from selfishness to selflessness, from self-centeredness to love, from anger to patience, and from turmoil to inner peace. But while this

happens all the time to individuals, I am going to be using *revival* in a corporate sense, as in the “Pyeng Yang Revival.” For *revival* also means a moving of God among great masses of people so that multitudes are turned quickly to renewed zeal for obeying Him.

Theologian J. I. Packer puts it this way: “Revival, I define as a work of God by His Spirit through His word, bringing the spiritually dead to living faith in Christ and renewing the inner life of Christians who have grown slack and sleepy. In revival, God makes all things new, giving new power ... and new spiritual awareness to those whose hearts and consciences have been blind, hard, and cold.”<sup>8</sup>

Strictly defined, *revival* means a movement of God’s Spirit through which multitudes of believers are renewed (revived) in their zeal and commitment to the Lord, while awakening is when nonbelievers move from death to life (conversion). As both are often concurrent during powerful movements of God, I will be using the terms interchangeably. And while we often speak of revival as a “great work” or “outpouring” of God’s Spirit (because the Holy Spirit is the vehicle of our experience), we should never lose sight of this definition provided by David Bryant, lest we be moved from Christ-centered worship:

From whatever angle we view it, therefore, revival is fundamentally one thing: Revival is Christ. That’s because God can do nothing greater for His church than to reawaken us to the sufficiency, supremacy, and destiny of the Lord Jesus. Jesus exhausts for us all we can ever know about God. He encompasses everything we hope to receive from God, everything we hope to become for Him.<sup>9</sup>

Revivals are mentioned throughout the Scripture, and there have been many sprinkled over the history of the

church. This book will review some of those historic revivals, but to set a trajectory for how revival might occur on our campuses today, I will give primary attention to campus revivals and the students who (humanly speaking) brought them about. But I will also focus here because students as well as the campus were the overwhelming impetus for much of what God did in these revivals, whether as the sparks who ignited them or as the missionaries who spread them.

Starting in the early 1700s, and moving through the 1800s into the early 1900s, there have been several powerful movements of God's Spirit (revivals and awakenings) that have swept through the college campuses. The result of these movements was renewal among believers: self-destructiveness was changed to wholeness, apathy to zeal, impotence to power, hate to love, indifference to passion, and carnality to spirituality.

The result among unbelievers was equally startling. In some cases one third to one half of the students of a university were affected, giving their hearts and lives publicly to Jesus Christ and going on to become fruitful disciples.

Many of the universities involved in these revivals are well known. Thousands were converted and discipled at schools such as Princeton, Yale, Harvard, Baylor, Emory, Cornell, Northwestern, and the universities of North Carolina and Illinois. These later made a tremendous impact upon society for good and for God.

For example, at Princeton University in 1875, a Christian student group known as the Philadelphia Society joined with the YMCA (which at that time was committed to evangelism and discipleship), with the following objectives:

1. The importance of seeking the salvation of students for their own sake and their influence as educated men

2. The importance of securing their salvation while in college
3. The value of united work and prayer

These objectives were to be achieved by the following:

1. Diligent study of the word of God
2. Prayer
3. Personal work (one-to-one evangelism)
4. Efficient organization<sup>10</sup>

Through this effort, the famous nineteenth-century evangelist Dwight L. Moody was persuaded to conduct a series of evangelistic meetings on the campus of Princeton, during which nearly one third of the student body indicated that they had received Christ. Among those working with the Princeton YMCA were some of the most outstanding campus leaders of that generation. One such student evangelist eventually became president of Princeton University. Later still, he became better known as T. Woodrow Wilson, the twenty-eighth president of the United States.

Though we lack exposure to our spiritual history through secular textbooks, these experiences have been common in the history of colleges and universities. Believers were stirred for God and thereby changed. Unbelievers were so stunned by these movings of God's Spirit and the transformation in the lives of believers that they came in droves to give their lives to Christ, becoming part of great spiritual movements on their campus. Christian society swelled, mission movements advanced, morality on campus and in society changed, professors were converted, great leaders emerged, and major segments in the life of this country, as well as the world, were deeply affected.

### **A Fifty-Year Wait?**

As we'll be touching on several different revivals and awakenings, it might be helpful to have a basic time line of the revivals as well as the countries that were impacted.

Great Awakening (1726–56): affecting Germany, the U.S., Wales, England, and Scotland

Second Great Awakening (1776–1810): affecting the U.S., Canada, Scotland, Wales, England, Finland, and Norway

Transatlantic Revival (1813–46): affecting Germany, Switzerland, Holland, France, Norway, Sweden, the U.S., Scotland, Wales, England, South America, and the Pacific Islands

Layman's Prayer Revival (1857–95): affecting the U.S., Canada, Scotland, Wales, England, and South Africa

Global Revival (1900–39): affecting the U.S., Wales, England, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Scandinavia, India, Ethiopia, East Africa, Korea, Norway, and China

Evangelical Awakenings (mid twentieth century): Canada, the U.S., Taiwan, and the British Isles<sup>11</sup>

It's generally agreed that the last worldwide revival occurred over one hundred years ago, in the Global Revival, whose apex was the years 1904 to 1907. Here are a few snapshots of that spiritual tsunami that arose in Wales and swept across the globe:



As the revival leaped from Wales to England an estimated two million people received Christ.

When it arrived at Norway, the churches were so packed that they had to ordain lay- persons in order to serve Communion to the masses.

The revival moved from Europe, to Africa, to India, to China, to Korea, and then to the U.S.

In Atlantic City, New Jersey, out of a population of sixty thousand, it was said that “not even fifty” refused to come to the Lord Jesus Christ.

In Paducah, Kentucky, the First Baptist Church added one thousand new converts as the pastor died, reportedly from exhaustion.

In Denver the mayor declared a day of prayer, and by ten in the morning the churches were filled and another twelve thousand packed downtown theaters.

It is estimated that twenty million people came to Christ in the U.S alone.<sup>12</sup>

As the revival spread, virtually every campus in America was touched, as were campuses in Wales (where the revival began), England (Oxford and Cambridge), Ireland (Queens in Belfast), Scotland (Edinburgh University), Germany (the University at Halle), China (Tungchow and Weih sien, where 196 out of 200 students professed faith in Christ), Korea (Pyongyang), India (Nellore, Ongole, and Kottayam College), South Africa (Lovedale), as well as campuses in Australia, New Zealand, Chile, Brazil, and beyond. And, as a result of what God was doing on the campuses, as many as fifteen

thousand college students went overseas as missionaries from the U.S. alone.

This quote from an eyewitness at Linfield College in the U.S. may help you to get your mind around how powerfully God was at work on the campuses around the world: “[I] saw something ... never witnessed before, the president and all of the faculty on their knees together praying for the unsaved students under their care.”<sup>13</sup> It is doubtful that any of us have witnessed such a thing or such an outpouring of God’s power. But we could.

Many historians place the most recent spiritual outpouring in the midst of the twentieth century, though it was more a resurgence than a revival, lacking in magnitude and drama. Among notable events, this time period saw the Christian population in China grow by millions; an uninvited evangelist (Thomas Hicks) arrive in Argentina and end up holding one of the largest evangelistic campaigns in church history (two million attending); the launching of the Billy Graham Crusade, Youth for Christ, Navigators, and InterVarsity’s first mission conferences (Urbana). There was also revival on the campuses of Seattle Pacific, Northwest, Baylor, Houghton, and other colleges. And, perhaps, most significant of all, was the Forest Home College Briefing Conference, a national event for youth and college ministers held in June 1947.

At the Forest Home College Briefing Conference the evening’s main speaker, Henrietta Mears, gave an impassioned plea for total commitment and availability to Christ. Several men were so moved by her words that they asked to meet in her cabin later for prayer. Mears’s biographer would describe the ensuing prayer meeting in these words:

As they knelt they were overcome by a sense of helplessness and inadequacy. They prayed on into the late hours of the night. There was much

weeping and crying out to the Lord. At times no one prayed as God spoke to them.

Then the fire fell. However it can be explained. God answered their prayer with a vision. They saw before them the college campuses of the world teeming with unsaved students, who held in their hand the power to change the world. The college campuses—they were the key to world leadership, to world revival.<sup>14</sup>

One of the men attending that prayer time was Bill Bright, a Christian for all of a few months. Dr. Bright would go on to found Campus Crusade for Christ in response to this powerful revelation. And God has used the ministry of Campus Crusade to expose billions to the gospel of Jesus Christ around the world.

While the movement of God in the mid twentieth century may not be accorded the status of a full revival (I wonder who makes such decisions), and while these revivals have differed in magnitude, the observable pattern of these awakenings seems to be an outpouring every forty or fifty years in any given location/country—seemingly timed contractions or labor pains of the kingdom to come. And for those of you doing the math, that would mean we are overdue (though God is never obliged to do anything).

Indeed, collegiate revival could well occur in our day. In fact, as the missionary statesman Dr. James Stewart noted, you and I may be the fireseeds:

If we could but show the world that being a follower of Christ is no tame, humdrum, sheltered monotony but the most exciting experience the human spirit can know, then those who are standing outside the church looking askance at Christ would come crowding

into our churches to pay Him allegiance and we might well see the greatest revival since Pentecost.

Joining with hundreds of thousands of students on campuses around the world, we could play a significant role in seeing the campus transformed and with it the world, for the fifty-year-old slogan of Campus Crusade for Christ is every bit as true today: “Reach the campus today, reach the world tomorrow”—the campus being the highway of the Great Commission.

Charles Finney said, “One way that we may know that revival is coming is when it is desperately needed.”<sup>15</sup> I think we can settle on the fact that revival is desperately needed only because the lexicon holds no stronger term than *desperately*.

### **Turning Campuses Right Side Up**

This book is intended to help you as a student or faculty or staff member to become that fireseed for spiritual transformation and revival on your campus. True, you are only one person, but as we will see, that is of little consequence to God. By grabbing hold of the truths in this book, you can be used by God to influence thousands for Jesus Christ. You can help turn the campus right side up for the Savior.

Pause and ask God to make you available to be one of those people who will spark a revival on your campus. You may have great natural abilities or virtually none at all—this is not the issue. It is not your ability that God is looking for but your availability. Before reading any further, tell the Lord that you desire to be available to Him, to be used to seed a campus awakening. Believe Him for something supernatural. Offer to Him your mustard seed of faith.