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In truth, our first motive in fasting and prayer must be to return to God. It must not be for what He will do in "revival," regardless of how crucial the need for revival may be.

As you hear the call for fasting and prayer for revival, understand anew of what true revival is:

Revival is not what happens to the "lost," but what happens to God's people when we come in brokenness and grief over sin—our sin—and are restored to that holy love relationship with God. Revival is when God's people are once again living to the praise of His glory and to the glory of our Savior, Jesus Christ.

We will always know, as God's people, when we have returned, because we will see fresh evidence of a fresh and powerful sensitivity to sin and to the Savior.

In this restored relationship with Him, God is once again able to work through his people to touch a lost world redemptively.

The "return" of God's people to a holy relationship with Him is vital. Any call that passes over lightly the "returning process" can sideline or delay what we so desperately need and long for, the revival of God's people, and the salvation of multitudes who are lost.

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CRY OUT AMERICA SEPTEMBER 11

Cry Out America will hold a prayer gathering on September 11, 2011.

For specific details visit:

www.facebook.com/cryoutamerica

SEE YOU AT THE POLE SEPTEMBER 28

Join the gatherings at the flag pole on September 28, 2011.

For specific details visit:

www.syatp.com



CHURCH PRAY! is a monthly corporate prayer help to local churches published since 1991. This bulletin is posted for free download at "Resources" on our Web site or available as a one-sheet master for use on a copy machine or for quick print services. A monthly First Friday Prayer Letter and mid-week Alert are also available upon request. To subscribe to Church Pray! or inquire about other services, contact: INTERCESSORS FOR AMERICA PO Box 915, Purcellville, VA 20134. Tel 540-317-2070; E-mail ifa@ifapray.org Web sites: www.IFAPray.org www.GetAmericaPraying.com

INTERCESSORS FOR AMERICA

**CHURCH
PRAY!**

*"Return to Me...
and I will
return to You."*

—Zechariah 1:3

"RETURN TO ME"

BY HENRY BLACKABY

We are increasingly hearing a "mixed message" about the role of prayer and fasting. At times it is distorted, at best it is incomplete and imbalanced. A mixed message could be fatal to true revival and spiritual awakening!

The cry of God is always, "return to Me." In Zechariah 1:3 (NIV), God says, "Return to Me...and I will return to you." We hear the same call again and again in the New Testament. Throughout, the Bible clearly speaks of "return to Me" as a call to repentance, to revival, to restoration of the love relationship that unites human beings with God. Repentance always brings a return of the love relationship with God.

Today we see a different focus.

We are being called on to "fast and pray...for revival!" The emphasis is dangerously close to shifting from "repent and return to Me" to fasting and praying for something—for revival.

God knows we need a revival, or else we may perish. Saving non-Christians is crucial and right and good, but revival is a deliberate turning back to God, a returning to God by His people in repentance, brokenness, and grief over their sin and love of their love-relationship with Him. Are we grieving over having left our first love, over our broken relationship?

The present focus in fasting and prayer—often just fasting—appears to have as its goal what God will do for us rather than to us. But God's goal is for us to have a restored relationship with Him. While such a relationship will cause our lives and churches to become "highways of holiness" over which He can again go in power to the lost, we are called only to "return." What happens as a result is all God's doing.

Today, the focus on fasting and prayer can have as its motive the results of revival, without any mention of repentance, brokenness, and grief over our sins.

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**SEPTEMBER 2011
PRAYER FOCUS**

**Sunday, September 4, 2011
ADDICTIONS** – The use of ecstasy, heroin and other drugs is on the rise among youth. Alcohol abuse and prescription drug addiction is rampant among all ages. Pray that all in your area who are struggling with addictive / compulsive behavior receive grace to recover.

**Sunday, September 11, 2011
10/40 WINDOW** – Pray for those in the 10/40 Window . Ask the Lord to open avenues for His Word to be multiplied to those held captive by oppressive governments that do not allow freedom to openly worship the only true God openly. "...where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty." (2 Cor 3:17). Visit www.win1040.com to participate in this united effort of prayer.

**Sunday, September 18, 2011
COLLEGE & UNIVERSITY CAMPUSES** – Offer thanksgiving for the renewed local church outreach and strong Christian witness on many U.S. college and university campuses. Pray it increase, that more believers will routinely "prayer-walk" campuses in your area.

**Sunday, September 25, 2011
SEE YOU AT THE POLE** – Pray for Christian educators in your area, state and the nation. Pray for the more than two million students nationwide who are expected to gather around their school flagpoles early Wednesday, September 28 for "See You at the Pole." (www.syatp.com)

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