

The City Church, New York

The Prayer of Thanksgiving and Intercession – Sunday January 29, 2006

On this day in 1951, Evan Roberts passed into the Nearer Presence of Jesus. He'd led the great Welsh Revival of 1904. The people of Wales were so caught up in that revival that, if you look up the annual tabulations of the Welsh football championships, the only stat you'll find for 1904 is one word: "Revival." Now that's revival.

Let us pray.

O Spirit of the Living God:

We praise You that You are, forever, the Covenant-keeping God and that You are the One who is always slow to anger and ever abounding in steadfast love. We're too often Your Covenant-breaking people, hardly slow to anger and not very abounding in steadfast love. Yet again, this morning, we have been drawn to You who forgives us into repentance and greets us once more with Your open arms of mercy and strength. May we greet You and our neighbors with open arms, for we're somewhat aware of what we'd be without Your mercy, and we're somewhat aware of where we'd be without Your strength. May the gifts of hunger and thirst You've so kindly given us keep us close to You, O Bread of Life, who fills our hunger, O Living Water, who quenches our thirst.

Today, as we recall Your redeeming and refreshing of the people of Wales a century ago, and as we reflect on Your gracious answers to those earnest prayers of our brother, Evan, and others who begged to be bent for the work of revival in their day, we would dare to ask that we be bent for such a work of mercy here in our country, now in our day. We are as needy of revival as they were then. Make us as ready for revival. Break the bonds of our bondage to all that distracts us from making the joy of Your presence our priority. Bend us to Your will that we, too, might hunger and thirst for righteousness. Prepare us as You prepared Your servants in past times. May we overcome selfishness, cynicism, indifference and all else that entraps us into complacency and conformity to this world's priorities. Give us hearts for revival starting in ourselves and stretching out from our own neighborhoods to our neighbors across this nation. Bend us, here, in this hour today. Bend us through the coming week and in the months ahead, that the joy of Your kingdom come to this earth, heart by heart by heart, might be our heart's desire.

We pray in Jesus' name and add the words he so graciously taught us to pray, saying:

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day, our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.