

# The Leader and Spiritual Awakening

By Johnny L. Derouen

## Pre-Session Assignments

One week before the session, participants will take the following assignments.

### Assignment One

Read 2 Chronicles 7:12–14; then read the comments related to 2 Chronicles 7:13–14 in the section **It's in the Book**. Prepare to share your answers to the following questions: Who allowed or caused the catastrophes to occur? What does this tell you about God's sovereignty (being in control)? Using an online or printed Bible commentary (your pastor or a church leader can help), research 2 Chronicles 7:13–14. Prepare to share what the phrase "My people who are called by My name" means. Who are these people?

### Assignment Two

Read the comments related to 2 Chronicles 7:14 in the section **It's in the Book**. Using an online or printed Bible commentary (your pastor or a church leader can help), research 2 Chronicles 7:14. Prepare to share your answers to the following questions: What are the first two conditions for God to heal the land? What do "humble themselves" and "pray" mean?

### Assignment Three

Read the comments related to 2 Chronicles 7:14 in the section **It's in the Book**. Using an online or printed Bible commentary (your pastor or a church leader can help), research 2 Chronicles 7:14. What are the final two conditions for God to "heal their land"? What do "seek My face" and "turn from their wicked ways" mean?

## Scripture to Memorize

*if My people who are called by My name humble themselves, and pray and seek My face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and heal their land.* 2 Chronicles 7:14

## Session Goal

Consistent with God's Word and in the power of the Holy Spirit—by the end of this session, disciples will understand what the conditions are for a spiritual awakening and how to lead out in meeting those conditions.

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Johnny is also a member of the Metro Youth Ministers Association (serving as chairman in 1990). He has written articles for a number of youth ministry publications, authored the book *Christ, the Basis of Faith* (2008), and has written contributing chapters on youth ministry and teaching youth in many books including *Accelerate* (2013).

## It's in the Book

30 minutes

### Real-Life Scenario

During the years immediately following 1904, a spiritual awakening that began in Wales spread worldwide and impacted every continent. The lives of millions of people were impacted by the gospel. Many historians believe the testimony of an eighth-grade Welsh girl, Florrie Evans, was the spark that ignited that awakening. (For more details, consider doing an online search.)

Have you ever been part of true revival that can be explained only by the power of God? Do you believe our nation and world stand in great need of revival and awakening today? Who do you think God might choose to use to spark the next great revival?

**Read** 2 Chronicles 7:12–16 out loud.

### Studying the Passage

**Verses 12. chosen this place for Myself.** Solomon had just led the nation of Israel to complete the building of the first temple for worshiping the living God. The people celebrated the new temple for three straight days! Solomon finally told the people to stop celebrating and to return to their homes. Solomon went back to the temple alone, and the Lord appeared to him. The Lord told Solomon that He had chosen this house (the temple) for Himself as a place of sacrifice and worship. **house of sacrifice.** In 70 AD, the Roman general Titus conquered Jerusalem. The temple was destroyed by the Jewish defenders to prevent its sacrilege. So far, the temple has never been rebuilt. First Corinthians 3:16 and 6:19 teach that now we (the followers of Jesus) are the temple of the Holy Spirit, where God places His presence at salvation. So now we are the house of sacrifice, consecrated (set apart) by God. We have His attention!

### Assignment One Feedback

The person who completed **Assignment One** during the week can now share answers to the following questions: Who allowed or caused the catastrophes in 2 Chronicles 7:12 to occur? What does this tell you about God's sovereignty? In 2 Chronicles 7:14, what does the phrase "My people who are called by My name" mean? Who are these people?

### Studying the Passage

**Verse 13. When I shut up . . . command . . . send.** God reminded Solomon (and us) that He is sovereign (in control). He sends or allows tragedies and catastrophes for His purposes, and all things must go through Him. (Hebrews 4:14–16 and Ecclesiastes 3:11 are good verses for further study on this issue.) He is always with us through good and bad times. All He does is for His glory, His kingdom, and our eventual good. Total trust in Jesus is necessary for spiritual awakening.

**Verse 14. if My people who are called by My name.** This Hebrew phrase literally means "people of the covenant." The phrase refers to people who have made a covenant with God (a treaty or a solemn promise). The Hebrew people of the Old Testament were people of the covenant, but today those who follow Jesus are also a new covenant people. Therefore, what God said to Solomon has meaning for believers today. His words allow us to know His conditions for spiritual awakening.

## Assignment Two Feedback

The person who completed **Assignment Two** during the week can now share answers to the following questions: According to 2 Chronicles 7:14, what are the first two conditions for God to heal the land? What do “humble themselves” and “pray” mean?

### Studying the Passage

**Verse 14. humble themselves . . . pray . . . seek My face . . . turn.** God set down four conditions for healing the land (spiritual awakening and revival). The four conditions are all Hebrew idioms meaning to continually humble, pray, seek, and turn. This is not a one-time action. To meet God’s requirements for revival, we must continually be humbling, praying, seeking and turning. **humble.** The Hebrew root word for “humble” here means “to be humbled, to make low.” In other words, when we begin to grasp who Jesus really is today, we yield totally to Him. We realize that only Christ can bring about a true spiritual awakening. We still do our best for Him, but we confess to Him that unless He moves, spiritual awakening will not occur. We cannot make it happen. We recognize who He is and yield all to Him.

### Discussion Question

What are some of God’s characteristics that cause us to be humbled before Him?

### Studying the Passage

**Verse 14. pray.** How do we pray? We ask Him to move and to bring a spiritual awakening to us, our church, our school, our neighborhood, our workplace and our community. James 4:2; Luke 18:1–8; and Revelation 8:3–5 are excellent verses on prayer.

### On Your Own

In the space below, list people you desire to come to know Jesus. Then begin to pray daily for their salvation. Also pray daily that the name of Jesus would be made famous and exalted in your life, home, church, school, workplace and community.

## Assignment Three Feedback

The person who completed **Assignment Three** during the week can now share answers to these questions: According to 2 Chronicles 7:14, what are the final two conditions for God to “heal their land”? What do “seek My face” and “turn from their wicked ways” mean?

### Studying the Passage

**Verse 14. seek.** How do we seek His face? The word translated “seek” is a Hebrew word meaning “to actively inquire of.” We are to actively inquire (ask) of God to know Him well. This leads us to humble ourselves and trust Him more. Some ways we seek to know Him include reading the Bible, praying, worshipping with others, memorizing and meditating on Scripture, talking with godly Christians, studying God’s characteristics, and reading books about people who walked closely with Jesus. **turn.** How do we turn from our wicked ways? We need to be sure we have no unconfessed sin that we have not turned away from.

The word *confess* in Hebrew and Greek basically means “to admit, to say the same thing as.” When we sin, we are to agree with Jesus that what we have done is sin and that to continue in it would destroy what we were made to be and do. Then we choose to turn away from that sin (let it go, quit practicing it) and turn back to Jesus as King of our lives. Psalm 66:18 clearly says

that God will *not* hear the prayers of those who hold onto sin. We have to let go of the sin and turn.

### **Discussion Questions**

“Humble . . . pray . . . seek My face . . . turn” are all attitudes and actions of an individual believer. Corporately, those same four expressions could come to describe a youth group or church. What changes would need to take place for those four elements to become part of the DNA of your gathering of believers? In 2 Chronicles 7:14, what does God promise those who embrace these things?

### **Studying the Passage**

**Verse 15. My eyes will be open.** God says that if we meet His conditions, His eyes and ears will be open to our prayers. During times of revival, people experience an overwhelming sense of the presence of God. For many church members, God is just an idea or a far-off personality. During true revival, Christ followers experience His majestic presence and they are clearly changed by these experiences.

### **Discussion Question**

Since we have begun to meet God’s conditions and have the attention of His eyes and ears, what will we ask of Him as it pertains to spiritual awakening?

## **Heart and Hands**

8 minutes

Read again the **Real-Life Scenario** near the beginning of the lesson. Consider whether your answers have changed during the session.

Be silent for two or three minutes. Thank Jesus for His sacrifice and for the gospel. Adore Him for His glorious reign on the throne of heaven. Then ask the Holy Spirit to reveal to you:

1. A way the Scriptures you studied today will change your heart for the glory of Christ.
2. Or a way those Scriptures will lead you to stop doing something for the glory of Christ.
3. Or a way those Scriptures will lead you to do something for the glory of Christ.

Write what the Spirit reveals to you below and then be ready to share what you have written with the group.

## **Since Last Week**

5 minutes

## **Grace-Filled Accountability**

5 minutes

## **Planning for Evangelism, Missions, and Service**

5 minutes

## **Prayer**

7 minutes

## **At Home: Nail It Down**

Second Chronicles 7:12–16 announces God's basic conditions for spiritual awakening and the healing of our land. God says that if we humble ourselves, pray, seek His face, and turn from our wicked ways, He will hear from heaven and heal our land. He even reminds us that His eyes and ears are open to us. We actually have the attention of the living God of the universe.

Some possible reasons for a Christian not asking God to heal our land could be:

- Inadequate faith that God will move as He claims in 2 Chronicles 7:12–16
- Too busy or unconcerned to meet God's conditions and pray for spiritual awakening
- Personal sin that prevents someone from seeing the lost condition of those around us

What would motivate disciples to pray for spiritual awakening?

- A deep love and understanding of who God really is that moves us to obey Him and to make the name of Jesus known
- Brokenness over our sin that leads us to genuinely desire for others to know the forgiveness of Jesus we have experienced
- A burning desire to see a movement of God where the name of Jesus is exalted and our church, community, nation and world are powerfully awakened to Him

Disciples who love Jesus and love others come together to meet God's conditions and pray for spiritual awakening on a consistent basis.

### **Follow up Question**

*What are God's preconditions for spiritual awakening and revival?*

The Making Disciples curriculum is a gift from Southwestern Seminary to those who, for the glory of the Father and in the power of the Spirit, will spend a lifetime embracing the full supremacy of the Son, responding to His kingly reign in all of life, inviting Christ to live His life through them, and joining Him in making disciples among all peoples.