



## The Story Behind Call2Fall

May, 2018

Dear Christian Friend,

In introducing the Call2Fall, I want you to know just how the idea came about.

As a two-term member of the Louisiana House of Representatives, a GOP candidate for U.S. Senate, and for 15 years, President of the Family Research Council, I have been actively involved in the sphere of public policy-making. I have labored to defend faith, family and freedom by crafting and supporting policy that is family and church friendly and by fighting laws and proposals that are not. I've worked to educate the public, and especially believers in Jesus Christ, about legislation and government initiatives that will have an adverse effect upon the family and the ministry of the church.

But I also know that our political troubles are not our real problem; they are just a symptom. Our real problem runs much deeper. We are a nation adrift politically because we are adrift spiritually. That is why I am especially interested in serving pastors, providing them with tools to be spiritual "Watchmen on the Wall" to our nation and a moral conscience to the politicians who make our laws. With that in mind, I speak often in churches and pastors groups around the country. The Church, not politics, is the key to real "change" in our society.

One Sunday morning in March of 2009, I was scheduled to preach at a large Calvary Chapel outside of Los Angeles. I woke up early, about 4:00 AM, and began to pray not only for the four services that morning, but for the Lord to give me the answer to the questions I was being asked by conservative leaders about the pathway forward in an increasingly hostile environment for people of faith.

That morning I preached a message entitled "The Quest for Change" based on Matthew 4:17 and Jesus' call for people to "repent" (i.e., change) because "the kingdom of heaven is at hand." The call to action for the message came from 2 Chronicles 7:14 "If My people, who are called by My Name, will humble themselves and pray, and seek My face, and turn from their wicked ways, then will I hear from heaven, forgive their sins and heal their land."

That well-known verse begins with "If My people" - the Church; we can't wait for the political establishment or educational leaders or the entertainment industry to lead the effort. We, who are believers in Jesus Christ, must take responsibility to change the society in which we live into one that honors God and is, therefore, worthy of His blessing. Once the 'who' is established the 'what' becomes the focus.

Step 1: Humble ourselves. The Hebrew word used in scripture, "kana," means "to bow the knee or fall on ones knees in a display of submission." It is often associated with fasting and the afflicting of the soul.

Step 2: Prayers of intercession – a pleading for God's mercy when His judgment is merited.

Step 3: Seek God's Face - not His hand of provision, but His face of fellowship. At that point we are ready for...

Step 4: Turning from our wicked ways. Yes, our wicked ways. God is not talking about the world; He is still talking about His people.

When we come face to face again with our God, we do not see untangling ourselves from the sins and pleasures of this world as a religious duty, but a liberating delight. Once we have met God's conditions, He is then free to fulfill His promise to hear, forgive and heal.

The services that morning were a remarkable display of God's grace. Over 50 people made professions of faith in Christ. After the 3rd or 4th service, an elderly African American woman came up to me and said "You have the message that the Church needs to hear. You have the answer to what we are facing."

She went on to say that when she had come in that morning, the Holy Spirit had told her to get on her knees during the worship, but she didn't. She didn't want to be embarrassed. She said she had to later repent for being disobedient. Her focus was on the bowing of the knee. She said "you need to call churches across the nation to get on their knees, literally, before God."

Our conversation had no greater apparent meaning than many others I had that morning. I politely told her I would pray about it. She then became insistent that this message was "of the Lord" and "the Church needed to respond."

Later that evening while flying home, I picked up where I had left off reading a biography of Samuel Adams. I was at the place where the Continental Congress passed a resolution calling for a day in July of 1775 for "public humiliation, fasting and prayer; that we may, with united hearts and voices, unfeignedly confess and deplore our many sins; and offer up our joint supplications to the all-wise, omnipotent, and merciful Disposer of all events; humbly beseeching him to forgive our iniquities, to remove our present calamities, to avert those desolating judgments, with which we are threatened..."

Responding to the results of that day, James Warren wrote Samuel Adams a letter in which he said; "Three millions of people on their knees at once, supplicating the aid of Heaven, is a striking circumstance, and a very singular one in America."

At that point I remembered my earlier conversation with the elderly lady and my request of God that that morning for an answer to the dilemma America now faces. Could it be that until Christians humble themselves and get on their knees before God that we will have no answers, we will only see further political, moral and financial erosion?

For weeks I studied and meditated upon the book of Joel, which is 2 Chronicles 7:14 in book form. There are certainly parallels to be made between what Joel describes and what America is facing today. The chewing locust, the swarming locust, the swarming and crawling locust devoured the produce of the land leaving the people unable to even provide the grain and drink offerings. While no longer an agrarian society, we are seeing the vulnerability of our market based economy.

Some quickly point out that we are certainly not as bad off as the people were in Joel's day. True, but we could be closer than we think. A recent article highlighted a significant increase in church foreclosures. In an increasing number of churches the tithes and offerings are dwindling, the "grain offering" is ceasing.

What are we to do? We must follow God's prescription. What if on one Sunday in churches all across the nation, Christians literally fell on our knees before God as an act of humility, acknowledging our absolute dependence upon God's mercy, crying out for the nation in intercession and confessing our sins? Would God not hear the prayers of His people and forgive our sin and heal our land?

This call to fall on our knees before God is not an end in itself, but rather an opening for the Holy Spirit to move in a phenomenal way at a very critical time. I believe the answers we are seeking will then begin to flow freely.

I shared these thoughts with FRC's Pastors Council, a group of leading pastors from across the country who have partnered with FRC to help us better serve the nation's churches. I spoke with other leading pastors from various denominations. I spoke with long-time leaders in the intercessory prayer movement and with nationally known youth leaders.

All agreed that given our national circumstances, the crises in nearly every sphere of American life – the greatest crisis being our abandonment of God, Biblical standards, ethics and morals, both in the Church and the public square (our President has repeatedly said that “the United States is no longer a Christian nation”). Scripture warns that a nation that has known God, then turned its back on Him, will be severely judged (Dt 8:11-20; Ps 9:17).

America cannot prosper without God’s blessing. Those ultimately responsible – our pastors and churches, those who are part of the Household of God by faith in Jesus Christ – must urgently embrace the promise of 2 Chronicles 7:14, and return to God with humility.

Many churches set aside the Sunday closest to the 4th as a Citizenship Sunday, to celebrate America’s Christian heritage and the great liberty it has brought us. Is it not appropriate for Sunday, July 1 to be a day for God’s people, in churches all over America, to fall on our knees before a holy and gracious God?

God’s pastors have been given authority by God to call for times of prayer and fasting in their churches. With this in mind, we are asking pastors and churches to join us in this urgent endeavor and spread the word.

Help make Call2Fall a meaningful time of humble prayer and repentance for the sake of our nation.

With Hope in God’s Mercy,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Tony PERKINS". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized initial "T" and "P".

Tony Perkins