

Suggested Introduction for Cry Out America Courthouse Gathering

Welcome to the annual Cry Out America prayer gathering, a united effort seeking deep transformation and a Christ-awakening in our nation. Historically, when the people of God have set aside their differences to come together across this nation in extraordinary, united prayer, God has heard from heaven and responded with great outpourings of His Spirit. I am pleased to announce that today similar county prayer gatherings will be held in all 50 states, from the Hawaiian Islands to Alaska and across the mainland from coast to coast. We thank God for that! We believe America is on the verge of a sweeping move of God's Spirit that will touch every state, every county, every church, and every heart.

Though we face challenges as a nation, we can be thankful and proud to be citizens of the United States of America! Ours is a great nation worthy of the continued investment of our time and energy through prayer. We have gathered today for that very reason. Although serious moral and spiritual needs are evident in every arena of our society—family, church, government, marketplace, education, media, arts and entertainment—true believers in Christ have the opportunity to influence our culture, addressing those needs biblically in a spirit of love and compassion.

Today we have gathered at our county courthouse, a seat of authority and justice in this county, to symbolize those important issues across the nation. We will be calling out to God for a Christ awakening to come to our county, our cities, our state, our nation, and the Church. Your participation is deeply appreciated and indicates your concern for the challenges we face in America. We believe as we synergize our prayers with many others across the nation, a tremendous awakening and hunger for spiritual renewal will be kindled, having an impact far beyond the brief time spent today and for many years to come.

Our gathering will not be a time of celebration. Certainly there is a place for that, but our purpose today is to give honest and solemn reflection on the deep spiritual needs in our nation. In a period when the nation of Israel and God's people faced great moral and spiritual challenges, the prophet Joel wrote this prescription:

**Declare a holy fast;
call a sacred assembly.
Summon the elders
and all who live in the land
to the house of the LORD your God,
and cry out to the LORD.
(Joel 1:14, NIV)**

In obedience to the Lord, we have gathered on this occasion to Cry Out to the Lord.