The year was 1857. The battleship USS North Carolina, a 74-gun ship of the line launched in 1820 at the Philadelphia Navy Yard, was anchored in New York harbor. Her long years of duty were now reduced to being a naval receiving ship.

Among the many sailors on board were four young Christian crewmen, who decided that they should meet and pray. Looking for a private place for prayer, they met on the lower deck. Falling upon their knees, they instantly were filled with the Presence of God. So great was their joy that they started to sing and praise the Lord.

Wicked sailors, who were upon the top deck, heard the jubilant singing and decided to investigate. Upon discovering that it was coming from a secret prayer meeting, the vile bunch decided to mock and jeer. Descending the iron stairs to the place of prayer, the mob fell under the powerful presence of the Holy Spirit. Their jeers turned to bitter tears. Conviction overcame them and they began to cry out to God for mercy and forgiveness. For several days, the prayer meeting continued. Hundreds of the crew were converted. The captain of the ship sent a message ashore requesting the help of pastors and ministers to come and pray with the sailors.

The USS North Carolina became a bastion of revival. Converted sailors, upon completing their training, were assigned to other ships in the fleet. Wherever they went, revival broke out. Revival swept the US fleet. Prayer is a powerful force! May these days and His ways come again to us – quickly!