**Revival: An Introduction**

**What is Revival? *God’s glory returning to the Church***

***Revival***!! The word brings thoughts of masses of the lost running to the altar for salvation. It also pictures *the Church walking in purity and holiness* with God’s presence being demonstrated with *extraordinary manifestations of His power*. But what, *really*, is revival. Actually, it is simply **a period of unusual (extraordinary) blessing with the presence of the Lord being tangibly manifested in His Church** and it is *sent by God* **to awaken a sleeping and compromised Church**. It is similar to what happened on the day of Pentecost in Acts chapter 2: an outpouring (baptism) of the Spirit upon His Church affecting a large number of people for a period of time. With this understanding, several things must be noted:

* **Revival comes sovereignly from God Himself**. It is *initiated*, *led* and *ended* by the Lord Himself at His discretion. Revivals cannot be planned or begun by human will. He Himself decides *if*, *when*, *where*, and *how* He returns in His glory to the Church.
* **Revival is TO THE CHURCH and FOR THE CHURCH**. It is usually preceded by *a period of decline* after the Church has embraced the ways of the world and lost its authority and effective witness. Revival comes after the Church has *denied, diluted* or *ignored foundational doctrines of the faith*. In revival, the Holy Spirit awakens the Church through *direct intervention* as He manifests His presence in tangible ways, thereby re-awakening His people to the knowledge of *who God is* and *who they are as His people*. It comes as the Word is *glorified* through preaching, reading of the Word, and unusual manifestations of His great power.
* **Revival differs from evangelistic campaigns**. As previously stated, revival is initiated by the Lord himself to awaken *His Church* through an outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon ***believers***. Those *outside* the Church become affected as the outpouring overflows beyond the Church. Evangelistic campaigns, on the other hand, are planned and initiated *by the Church* to impact those *outside the Church* and cause them to run *into the Church*. In revival there is *no need to manipulate people* (extended pleadings and urgings, etc.) to obtain a response from them. People respond directly from *an appeal to the heart by the Holy Spirit*. Often, the altars become filled without *any* invitation or call to respond. In *evangelistic campaigns*, however, there is often *manipulation and extended urging of people* to get them to respond. A **most significant difference** between revival and evangelistic campaigns is the **duration of the fruit gained from them**. In *evangelistic campaigns* only about *5-10%* of people who respond are still in the faith 10-20 years after the campaign; whereas, in *revival* *80-90%* of the fruit remains 10-20 years after the revival.

**What Happens In Revival? *Conviction***

In revival, as has been stated, *the Lord draws near to His people to awaken them and the Holy Spirit manifests His presence in a tangible way*. Normally, the Holy Spirit *gently* interacts with us through shedding His light upon the Word, prayer, fellowship, preaching, etc. But in revival there is an *awareness of His very presence*. There is a *tangible awareness* of *His holiness* and *our compromise*. We, His Church, become acutely aware of *His perfections* and *our flaws*; *His power* and *our weakness*. We become *convicted of our failures and shortcomings* with the result that we become *burdened* to repent, be cleansed and purified. The *fear of the Lord* returns to the Church and in such an atmosphere *the Church postures itself before the Lord* with its face in the *dust*.

* **The testimony of Jesus goes forth powerfully**. The Holy Spirit of Truth puts the *spotlight of revelation* upon the *person* and *work* of Jesus. His *person* becomes real as there is a supernatural revelation of His *incarnation*, *servanthood* and role as our *Redeemer*. There is also a supernatural revelation of Jesus’s *work* as the Spirit reveals His work of *salvation*, *the cross*, and *redemption*. Jesus becomes the Lamb, the Lion, the Judge, the Bridegroom, and the great King in the hearts of His people.
* **The holy scriptures are glorified.** The Holy Spirit *reveals Truth* through Bible reading preaching, prayer and witnessing. The Word becomes an *arrow* shot directly into the hearts of God’s people
* **The Holy Spirit powerfully brings conviction.**  In an atmosphere of *holiness* and *the fear of the Lord*, we, the Church, are confronted with a conviction of God’s righteousness, our sin, and God’s wrath against sin.
* **In revival, emotional manifestations often occur**. This happens as people are impacted by the application of the *Word* to their hearts. This is not the *emotionalism* of the world where there is manipulation of men to produce a soulish emotional display. These responses come from *direct application* of the Word to the heart.

**What are the results of revival? *Reawakening of the Church***

In revival the Church is brought to *repentance* and draws near to God once again. There is purification and return to the foundational doctrines of the Faith. The Church is again *filled* with the glory of God and begins to walk with assurance, boldness and in the power of the Holy Spirit. It again becomes *separate* from the world while yet being *in* the world. The focus becomes *seeking first* the Kingdom of God and His righteousness. There is *heralding of the Great King and the coming of His Kingdom*. As a result, there is an *overflow* to those outside the Church as they are confronted with the truth and power of the living God; the Church giving testimony of Jesus with *authority* and *assurance*. As the overflow of the Spirit reaches the lost, *they* run into the Church and are *saved* and *transformed*. Ultimately, even society itself is affected as large groups of people embrace the way of righteousness and a *moral compass* returns to the land. It is amazing to realize that it was the *revival in England* led by Wesley and Whitefield in the 1700’s that transformed that society and prevented the French Revolution from spreading there.

**How does revival come? *Prayer***

There have been *numerous* *revivals* during the period of church history and they are all *unique*. Some were in *large cities*, some in *hidden places*. Some were led by *well-known men*, others by *unknown vessels* chosen by the Lord. Some were of *short duration* and others *lasted years*. So, there is great variation. However, there are threads that are *common* to all of them.

* **The initiator has always been a *man* or *group of people* with a burden of *agony* and *grief* over the backslidden condition of the church and the reproach borne by the name and glory of God.**
* **The revivals have come after a period of intense *repentance,* *prayer* and *seeking the face of the Lord***
* **Prayer for revival was born by those who understood the *need* for revival and knew the *hope* of *crying out to God*.** From a *historical perspective*, they knew that it was through fervent prayer that God had manifested His glory in revivals in the past.
* **Revival always comes without *strategic plans*, *committees*, *programs* or the *manipulation of men***. They are *unscripted* and *not marketed*. They are led by the Holy Spirit *alone*!

**Our Invitation: Seek His Face and Wait upon the Lord**

We believe, as did Martyn-Lloyd-Jones, that with conditions of society and the church as they are today, **our *only* hope is for the Lord to re-visit His Church with *revival* and an *outpouring of the Holy Spirit***. Nothing less than another great awakening *can arrest the trajectory into darkness* that is occurring. History is filled with the Lord answering the cries of such men as ***Wycliffe*, *Huss*, *Luther*, *Edwards*, *Wesley*, *Whitefield*** and others. We believe that the eyes of the Lord are *searching out the land* for people who *groan in anguish* over a *compromised Church* and the *abominations in our land*. We believe His *ear is inclined*, waiting to *hear the cries* of His people for revival; and, we further believe that He is *eager* to answer those prayers. With that **HOPE**, we cry out: “**Why not *us*? Why not *now***?”

Therefore, we are setting aside a *season* whereby we *seek the Lord for revival*. We believe that there is something *more* *important* than prayer and that is praying with *understanding* while having *the burden of the Lord* supernaturally imparted. During this season of seeking the face of the Lord, we will *diligently learn* about revival and ask the Lord to impart *His heart for revival* to us. The way we will approach this is:

* We will ***learn* about revival** through **study of revival in the scriptures** with Martyn-Lloyd Jones.
* **Study the *history* of past revivals** to see how God has repeatedly answered the cry of His people for revival. This will give us **hope** and **expectation** that He will do it *again*.
* **Dedicate** and **commit** ourselves to **personal and corporate prayer for revival**.

We believe that ***nothing* is more important during this season** than ***crying out to God* for revival**. We also believe that **we are *coming into alignment with the heart and mind of God* as we respond in faith.**

Our prayer is:

* **Father, give me (us) grace to enter into this time of consecration.**
* **Father,”*purify me (us)*” with refiner’s fire.**
* **Lord, impart to me (us) *Your* burdenand *Your* anguish over the condition of the church and nations**
* **Father, let Your glory return to the church; and cause Your name to be made glorious in the earth.**