

Revive Us Again

September 7, 2014

Revival

Revival is a word so used and abused that we have become immune to its life-altering meaning. We are going to restore the power of the word by defining its rightful meaning and beholding its earth-shaking results.

Revive Us

Psalm 85:4-7 — prayer for restoration and revival

Psalm 119:25 — revival according to God's word

Psalm 119:37 — honest evaluation of our spiritual condition

Psalm 119:40 — longing for revival

Psalm 119:88 — revival according to His loving-kindness

Before revival happens there is always...

1. honest evaluation of our spiritual condition
2. desperation for God's restoration
3. intercession for God's salvation

God responds to honest, desperate, praying people!

Historically this has always been the case

"All the true revivals have been born in prayer. When God's people become so concerned about the state of religion that they lie on their faces day and night in earnest supplication, the blessing will be sure to fall." E. M. Bounds ¹

Honest evaluation of our spiritual condition, a desperation for God's restoration, intercession for God's salvation!

If we, our church, this nation, and this world are to have a revival, we must have these three foundational ingredients in our hearts! Apart from these three, it will not happen.

What does revival look like when it comes?

1. masses of people coming to Jesus produces cultural transformation
2. England 1730's and 1740's. "The First Great Awakening in England resulted in Sunday School and educational reform, changes to labor and child welfare laws, significant prison reforms, and the abolition of slavery. Revivals in England, America, and other places have historically shaped those nations into Christian communities" ²
3. J. Edwin Orr — Welsh Revival, 1904-1905 "Drunkenness was immediately cut in half, and many taverns went bankrupt. Crime was so diminished that judges were presented with white gloves signifying that there were no cases of murder, assault, rape or robbery or the like to consider. The police became unemployed in many districts. Stoppages occurred in coal mines, not due to unpleasantness between management and workers, but because so many foul-mouthed miners became converted

¹ E.M. Bounds, *The Classic Collection on Prayer*, (Bridge-Logos Foundation, 2001) p.537

² Elmer L. Towns and Douglas Porter, *The Ten Greatest Revivals Ever*, (Gospel Light Publications, 2000) p. 12

and stopped using foul language that the horses which hauled the coal trucks in the mines could no longer understand what was being said to them”³

4. J. Edwin Orr continues— Welsh Revival was: “the farthest reaching of the movements of general awakening, for it affected the whole of the evangelical cause in India, Korea and China, renewed revival in Japan and South Africa, and sent a wave of awakenings over Africa, Latin America and the South Seas.”⁴

The Welsh Revival began with one man: Evan Roberts, 26-yrs-old, a second-year Bible college student, who
1) recognized society’s pitiful condition, 2) was desperate for God’s restoration, 3) interceded for God’ salvation.

His personal prayer? “O God, bend me.”

Revival starts with me

- this nation is ripe for revival, with all its brokenness, addiction, and rebellion to God
- multitudes are praying

For a country to be revived, a state has to be revived.

For a state to be revived, a city has to be revived.

For a city to be revived, a church has to be revived.

For my church to be revived, I must be revived.

Revival starts with me!

We honestly have to evaluate our current spiritual conditions, and then respond where necessary with desperation and intercession — then revival happens!

Parable of the Soils

A parable is a natural story with a spiritual meaning, a word picture to help us see the unseen spirit realm

Matthew 13:3-9 — Jesus tells the parable of the sower and the four types of soils

Matthew 13:18-23 — Jesus interprets for us the parable of the sower and the four types of soils

The sower is a proclaimer of God’s Word, the seed is the Word

The Four Soils

The four soils represent the spiritual condition of people’s hearts

I. Wayside soil

- a heart littered with worldly weeds, discarded trash of society
- uncared for, uncultivated heart
- not ready to receive the seed that would cause it to be fruitful
- seed of Word is sown, but not understood, because the heart is uncultivated; seed stolen by the enemy

Are you Wayside soil, with the Word getting stolen, because there is no clean-up or cultivation of your heart to receive, believe, grow, share, or produce?

³ ibid, p.36

⁴ ibid, p.36

2. Stony soil

- not trashy, but stony, soil is picked up but not plowed up, no depth
- hears and receives Word with joy, seed sprouts immediately
- not rooted in self, no stability, no endurance, quick to stumble
- stumbles as enemy challenges the Word you have heard

Are you Stony soil? Receiving and rejoicing until the Word gets challenged, then you get scorched and stumble because you have no root and no depth in yourself?

3. Thorny soil

- seed of the Word choked out by thorns
- the cares and distractions of this world take priority over Kingdom spiritual growth
- deceitfulness and delusion of riches
- unfruitful for Kingdom because distracted and deceived by fruits of this world

Are you thorny soil? Is there significant, quantifiable, tangible Kingdom fruit coming from your life?

4. Good soil

- hears, understands, bears fruit, and produces 100, 60, 30 times what was sown

The same seed is sown to all four soils

Not all four soils produce the same results — the soil determines the fruit. Only one in four produces any fruit, the others are unproductive. 25% of hearers are the only ones making any Kingdom difference

Hosea 10:12 — sow for yourselves righteousness

- break up fallow ground that was plowed only slightly; till a fresh, deep furrow, prepare and cultivate it
- time to seek the Lord, until He comes and rains righteousness, revival, and restoration

Discussion Questions

1. In the past, how have you responded to the word “revival?” What does it mean to you now?
2. Is it realistic for us to ask God for true earth-shaking results?
3. What does it mean for us as individuals to be desperate for God to move? What does that look like?
4. How does the moral situation in England during “The First Great Awakening” compare to ours today?
5. After reading about the actual, physical cultural shift during the Welsh Revival in 1904-5; if it could happen there, could it happen here? Why or why not?
6. When Evan Roberts prays, “O God, bend me,” what is he asking God to do?
7. With the “wayside soil” representing “this part of my life does not merit my attention,” how does this affect your attitude in wanting to prepare your heart to hear God’s Word on Sunday, in daily Bible reading?
8. Is there significant, quantifiable, tangible Kingdom fruit coming from your life? How hard do you have to think to answer this question?
9. Can people be different types of soils at different times in their lives?
10. In honestly evaluating your spiritual condition today (not in the past), what soil are you? How do you need to respond?