

4 Things All Revivals Have in Common

“Revival isn’t what you think!”

Those words, uttered by revivalist Winkie Pratney, might seem strange. But having studied, seen and experienced revivals over the decades, he has come to realize, “God doesn’t always do the same thing in the same ways.”

As we cry out to God for revival, we must shed our expectations of what He will do, whom He will use, where He will move and when it will happen. In Charles Finney’s day, various religious leaders did not believe revival was happening even though multitudes were being saved. That move of God did not fit their vision of revival—so many of them missed what He was doing.

Even though every revival is unique, Pratney points out that there are four things they all have in common:

- First, the fear of the Lord comes. This fear resembles what Ezekiel experienced by the Kebar River when the glory of the Lord came and he fell facedown (Ezek. 1:28). It is like what Isaiah felt in the year King Uzziah died, and he cried out, “Woe to me ... I am ruined!” (Isa. 6:5, MEV). It is far more than the reverent respect many equate with the fear of the Lord.
- When the fear of the Lord comes; people are terrified! They see the truth of their condition in relation to the holiness of God.
- Because of this revelation, they realize they are a hopeless mess, destined for damnation unless someone saves them.
- Finally, and mercifully, the one who made the world will talk to each individual and change them. Colossians 1:13-14

describes it like this: “he has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son he loves, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.”

In his book, *Revival: Principles to Change the World*, Pratney quotes other revivalists who “defined revival as that which changes the moral climate of a community.”

I think we all agree that the moral climates of our communities are in desperate need of change. But if we seek revival, we are pursuing the wrong thing. Instead, we must relentlessly pursue the revival-giver. {eoa}

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