

Have We Lost Our Hunger For Revival?

For many years, the question has been asked, "Why is it that we don't see revival?"

The answer remains, "Because we are willing to live without it."

God fills the hungry and satisfies the thirsty (Ps. 107:9).

The rain falls on the dry land, and the fire falls on the sacrifice placed on the altar (Is. 44:3; 1 Kings 18).

These are consistent biblical principles.

And so, when we get to the point that we cannot live any longer without divine visitation and our hearts are ready to burst with longing for His glorious presence, we can be sure that the answer is near.

It is the exact opposite with those who are filled and satisfied with other things.

That is why God often comes in the back door, pouring out His Spirit in unexpected places and working through unlikely vessels. It's because the front door is often closed.

That's why Jesus was born in the manger. There was no room in the inn.

That's why He rebuked the church of Laodicea.

The believers there said, "I am rich, and have stored up goods, and have need of nothing." They did not realize that they were "wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked" (Rev. 3:17).

Doesn't that describe so many of us in the church of America

today?

Truth be told, our great abundance has been a blessing and a curse.

It has been a blessing because most of us don't live in grinding poverty and many of us have a surplus to help those suffering around the world.

But our great abundance has also been a curse.

We are so filled with other things—with sports and entertainment and possessions and activities and carnality—that there is little room for God in our lives. The distractions are endless and the love for other things crowds out our love for God.

How hungry are we?

How deeply do we yearn for God's kingdom to come to our nation?

How desperate are we to see a divine visitation rock our country, our city, our church, our home, ourselves?

These questions may not be relevant to you, but they are certainly relevant to me.

Do I really hunger and thirst for righteousness? What drives me and motivates me and energizes me? If you could watch my life for a 24-hour period, what would you determine mattered to me the most?

I'm not trying to lay a guilt trip on you (or on myself), but I am trying to ignite something deep within—a spark for more of God's presence, a spark of spiritual longing, a spark of passion and desperation. God will pour out His Spirit on those who are truly desperate for Him!

Let me give you a simple analogy.

Imagine that you are going away for a one-week retreat to meet with God. You are staying alone in a cabin where there is no TV, Internet access, or cell phone service, so you don't even bring your phone or laptop.

How many hours per day do you think you will read the Word and pray? How much quality time will you have with God?

Now imagine that identical scenario except with one slight difference: There is a giant-screen TV with cable access to all your favorite channels, plus a massive archive of your favorite movies and TV shows. And there is high-speed Internet access and unlimited, free cell phone service for texting and calls. And did I mention the cabin has the most amazing sound system built into the entertainment room?

Do you think you might find less time for the Word and prayer? Do you think you might be just a bit distracted?

That is a picture of our lives today as 21st century Americans. In the words of Jesus, "the cares of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, and the desires for other things entering in choke the word, and it proves unfruitful" (Mark 4:19).

To give just one example, consider the power of the god of sports.

Not only does it consume our time, but it dominates our emotions.

When our home football team loses dramatically in the last second of a game we are devastated for days, our hearts torn with disappointment. And when we lose because the refs blow a call, our passion for justice is stirred. We cry out with one voice, "This is not right!"

But we are hardly brokenhearted and devastated over the fact that millions of Americans are lost and without God, that we

have been in steady moral and spiritual decline, that our nation leads the world in the exportation of pornography, that we still slaughter one million babies in the womb every year, and that we have more single-parent homes than almost any developed nation on the planet.

As for our passion for justice, the refs blowing a call troubles us more than the epidemic of human trafficking in our nation. Or do we even realize that cities like Atlanta, Seattle, San Diego and Charlotte are hotbeds for the trafficking of minors?

I'll say it again: I'm not trying to lay a guilt trip on anyone, nor will a guilt trip produce spiritual fruit.

I am trying to serve as a faithful physician, analyzing our symptoms and providing a diagnosis of our condition with a view toward regaining our health. For the real issue is not so much the state of the nation but the state of our individual hearts, and one coal burning bright can set the other coals ablaze.

Is there anything stopping you from seeking God in private, asking Him to light a fresh fire in your heart, crying out to Him to bring you back to your first love, supplicating Him to glorify Jesus afresh in your eyes?

Is there anything more important than this?

Wherever you are, however far you have fallen and however great your own needs, our God will not refuse your cry.

Isaiah 57:15 says, "For thus says the High and Lofty One who inhabits eternity, whose name is Holy: I dwell in the high and holy place and also with him who is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones."

Let's take our Father at His Word, determining to ask and seek

and knock until the answer comes.

We cannot live any longer without a fresh visitation from on high.

So pray with me right now, "Lord, start the work in me!"