

History Proves That Praying for Revival Matters

While praying for a heaven-sent visitation of God, the thought came to me that maybe one of the reasons we are not seeing the revival that many of us have been praying a long time for, is because we have not aligned our prayers, words and actions with why Jesus came to earth.

We know that 1 John 3:8 tells us Jesus came to destroy the works of the devil. We know He came to refute the lies of Satan (Matt 4:3-10); the lies of the religious establishment, as the Gospels are full of such examples; to heal the sick, feed the hungry, cast out demons, bring hope to the hopeless, to preach the gospel to the poor, heal the brokenhearted, proclaim freedom to the captives, recover sight to the blind, bring freedom to the oppressed, re-establish justice and righteousness ... to name a few.

I have read a wheelbarrow-full of books on revival, and yes, there were healings, signs and wonders, people falling prostrate, spiritual gifts being demonstrated, miracles and more, splattered throughout revival history. Yet, they are not consistent to every revival; but there is one common denominator in every revival I have studied: souls being saved!

Souls being saved, lives being transformed from the inside out, His children being delivered from the powers of darkness and conveyed into His kingdom (Col 1:13), being changed into a new creation (2 Cor 5:17), is exactly why Christ Jesus came. Luke 5:32 says Jesus came to call sinners to repentance; 1 Timothy 1:15 declares Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; and to give Himself a ransom for all (1 Tim. 2:6). And Luke 19:10 states the Son of Man has come to seek and save that which was lost. We are also told that the Lord is not

willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance (2 Pet. 3:9), while 1 Timothy 2:4 settles the discussion with the statement that God our Savior desires all men to be saved.

I remember reading in a book about revivals that one old-time revivalist told the crowd that, if possible, he wished they all could spend a day in hell. He went on to explain that he was concerned that the church did not have a proper understanding of hell, nor grasp that if their family, friends and neighbors did not accept Jesus into their heart as Lord and Savior, that is exactly where they will spend eternity. He then prayed they would have deep conviction, a heavy anguish, an agony in their soul, that their family, friends and neighbors would either spend eternity in hell or heaven; and they would do everything they could to pray and present Jesus well to them so that their eternal home would be in heaven with their gracious, compassionate and loving Creator God and Father.

I had to ask myself if I really grasped the price Jesus and the Father paid for me to have a relationship with them (1 Cor 6:20; 7:23; 2 Cor 5:21; 1 Peter 1:18-19). And the overwhelming, never-ending, reckless love they have for you and me. Do we really grasp that Jesus gave His life to purchase freedom for everyone (1 Tim. 2:6)? Or the pain and agony both our Father and Jesus paid for our peace (Isa 53:4-5)? Do we really comprehend to the fullest that our God, our Father, so loved the world (you, me, everyone), that He gave His only Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life? Do we really grasp that in our innermost being?

What would happen if we changed our prayer focus from what we want to see in a revival (healings, miracles, signs and wonders and more), or what we think a revival should look like to what Jesus wants: souls saved? O God, give us Your heart, Your passion, a deep anguish in our souls, for those who don't

know You and Your abundant, outrageous, unstoppable love.

I would now like to explore further a point I listed in my first "Why Pray for Revival" article; that we do not pray for revival because we have not studied past revivals, thus we do not know what happens in a revival and therefore have no basis for any expectation of one, and thus no faith and desire to pray for revival.

A few of years ago, while I was praying for revival in the land, I heard the Holy Spirit say; "Pray, that what I did for them then, I will do for you now." That has become my heart cry: O Jesus, what you did for them then, do for us now!

But, for that prayer to have any meaning, any fervency and impact, one has to know what He has done in the past in regards to revival. Some might prefer to call it a renewal, refreshing, reformation, restoration, transformation, a God-movement, an awakening, an awareness, a move of the Spirit. Regardless of what we call it, it is a heaven-sent visitation of God, His Glory, His manifest presence, covering the earth as waters cover the sea. (Hab. 2:14; Isa. 11:9; Ps. 72:19; Num. 14:21; 2 Cor 2:14)

Let's fan the flame of revival in our lives making ourselves hungry to pray for a heaven-sent visitation of God in our city, our region, our country, our world, by studying past revivals. And may they convict us and stir us to pray night and day for His kingdom to come, His will to be done.

1727 – Herrnhut, Germany; Moravians. Unified prayer from about 300 refugees brought forth a great hunger for Jesus and His Word. Everyone desired above everything else that the Holy Spirit would have full control. Self-love, self-will, as well as all disobedience, disappeared, and an overwhelming flood of grace swept them all into the great ocean of divine love. This brought forth a night and day prayer watch that lasted over 100 years and birthed the first systematic sending of

missionaries around the world to win the lost.

1735 – New England, North America; Jonathan Edwards (The Great Awakening): The minds of people were wonderfully taken off from the world. In tears, weeping, sorrow and distress, lost souls flocked to Jesus in great numbers day after day and found joy, love, pity and concern for souls of their neighbors.

1739 – London, England; John Wesley and George Whitefield: During meetings, the crowd would fall to the ground, dropping as thunderstruck. Enthusiastic singing, powerful preaching, crowds gripped with conviction, repentance and weeping, the crowds swelled to 50,000 at open meetings on hillsides, with untold thousands being saved.

1781 – Cornwall, England: Concerts of prayer were held each evening until midnight, impacting the nation with social change, creating a climate for political reform such as abolition of slavery, with a multitude of names being added to the book of life.

1801 – Cane Ridge, North America; Baron Stone (Second Great Awakening): 12,500 out in the woods of Cane Ridge, near Lexington, Kentucky. With seven ministers preaching at the same time, the noise was like the roar of Niagara Falls. At one time, over 500 were swept down in a moment as if a battery of a thousand guns had been opened upon them. People were falling down, crying out, trembling, groaning and crying for mercy. This Second Great Awakening produced the modern missionary movement and its societies, and again, added untold thousands into His kingdom.

1821 – Northeast North America, Charles Finney: Finney was called America's greatest evangelist. His revival ministry spanned over 50 years with over a half-million people converted under his ministry. He preached repentance and holiness; and the spirit of conviction would fill the audience

with groaning and moaning.

1857-59 – New York, Jeremiah Lanphier: A noon prayer meeting began with 1 businessman but soon became 6,000. Even ships coming into the harbor felt the presence of God and deep conviction causing everyone on ship being converted. It is reported that this 1858-1859 revival saw a million conversions.

1859 – Ulster, Ireland, James McQuilkin: A young boy came under conviction at school and announced “Oh, I am so happy, I have the Lord Jesus in my heart.” It spread throughout the whole school with bitter crying and then rejoicing. The noise was so loud that neighbors came to check it out and all got saved.

1859 – Natal, South Africa: The wave of soul-saving revival in 1857-1859 spread around the globe. Revival began among the Zulu tribes when an African servant girl sang and prayed in a meeting. The Holy Spirit fell on the group, and a roaring sound like approaching thunder surrounded the hall, which began to shake.

1900 – 1910 – The Revival Decade; The wind of the Holy Spirit carried the revival fire from nation to nation as the wonderful news of the revival in Wales reached prayer groups in many parts of the world. Wales, England, Scotland, Scandinavia, Europe, South Africa, India, Korea, China, Indonesia, Japan, South America, Australia, New Zealand, and North America were those touched, with countless millions being saved.

1914 – Belgian Congo, Africa, Charles Studd: Studd wrote that, “Some want to live within the sound of church bells; I want to run a rescue shop within a yard of hell.” He reported on the revival in Congo that the Holy Spirit came down in mighty power sweeping the congregation, with people falling, jumping, laughing, crying, singing, confessing, and shaking, leading

many to salvation.

1915 – Gazaland, South Africa, Rees Howells: A young girl came under conviction and as she prayed, she broke down crying, and within five minutes, the whole congregation were on their faces crying to God. Like lightning and thunder, the power came down, transforming a region and bringing tens of thousands to conviction, repentance and salvation in the county.

1927 – Shanghai, China, John Sung: Sung made it his regular habit to be up at 5:00 a.m. and pray for up to three hours. He believed prayer was the most important work of the believer. He defined faith as watching God work while on your knees. Estimates of conversions from this revival run to hundreds of thousands in China and South-East Asia.

1930 – A 50-year revival characterized by church planting and a great harvest of souls occurred in East Africa, primarily in the east-central African countries of Rwanda, Burundi and Uganda. This movement emphasized the new birth, being filled with the Holy Spirit, and living a life of spiritual victory.

1932 – God sent one of the greatest revivals of the 20th century to the Shantung province of northern China. The revival was characterized by conviction of sin, confession, clear experiences of the new birth and an emphasis upon a definite experience of the fullness of the Spirit. Like all revivals, prayer abounded, even all-night prayer meetings, as people hungered for the mighty workings of God.

1946 – Following World War II, significant ministries in healing and evangelism emerged in America, led by people who later had worldwide impact. These included William Branham, Kathryn Kuhlman, Oral Roberts, Billy Graham and T.L. and Daisy Osborn, to name a few.

1949-1953 – Hebrides Islands, Scotland (Duncan Campbell); Christine and Peggy Smith, two aged sisters praying night and

day fanned the flame that stirred six or seven men to pray in a barn, three nights a week from 10:00 p.m. to 3:00 a.m. All of this praying brought Duncan Campbell to Lewis Island, of the Hebrides. The night of his arrival, they asked him to speak for a short while at 9:00 p.m. to about 300 people in a church. The meeting went on to about 11:00 p.m., and when he closed the meeting and walked outside, he was astonished to find hundreds more outside of the church. While he and a team were ministering to the crowd, someone came up and told him he had to go to the police station. He asked, "Why, what is wrong?" to which he was told there were about 400 people gathered around the police station confessing their sins and faults, crying out for mercy, and the police did not know what to do with them. As he walked about a mile up a dirt road to the police station, he heard cries from people lying in the ditches, calling out to God in brokenness for His mercy.,

All over the island this same response was breaking out, all without any of them being in that church or hearing a word spoken from a preacher or evangelist. That, my friends, is revival, and that is why we pray for a heaven-sent visitation of God!

Another constant in revivals was Spirit led prayer, which led to deep conviction of both saved and unsaved; which led to much weeping; which eventually led to shouting and rejoicing (see Ezra 3:12-13 for such an example). Earnest, fervent prayer was the center (before, during and after) of every revival I have read about. Many of the revivals had all-day and all-night prayer meetings seven days a week prior to the actual revival breakout. Many like Studd, Howells, Hyde and Bartleman, continually fasted and prayed until family and friends were seriously worried for their health. In several instances, school classes had to be cancelled because the children came under such a tremendous burden for the lost; they were on the floor or on their knees moaning and groaning in intercession. All church, all-night prayer meetings became

the norm without a pastor begging for a few to show up at their prayer meetings. This was not a work of men but a work of God. Oh Jesus, do for us now what you did for them then.
{eoa}

The above have, in part, been taken from the following books: Revival Fires, History's Mighty Revivals by Geoff Waugh; Revival Fires by Wesley Duewel; Revival in the Hebrides by Duncan Campbell; When God Stepped Down from Heaven by Owen Murphy; Bright and Shinning Revival by Kathie Walters; and The Autobiography of Charles G. Finney by Charles G. Finney (edited by Helen Wessel).

Brad Tuttle is a mortgage broker who lives in Fort Collins, Colorado, with his wife, Juneal. He leads the Spiritual Warfare Attack Team (SWAT), a group of men from various churches and vocations. They intercede weekly, sometimes traveling by van (the SWATmobile) to places of great need. A partner ministry, NOCO Revivalists, provides intercessory prayer support to pastors and churches in northern Colorado. Brad provides leadership to both. Brad and Juneal attend Vintage City Church in Fort Collins, Colorado.