

Revival Begins At Home

We tend to think revival is something God drops on us without our participation and then we just enjoy the feeling.

Instead, it follows the same principle as individual repentance. It is individual repentance. God draws us to His Son, but we have to make the first conscious move toward God before He will draw close to us. Revival on any scale requires individuals who will draw close to God.

James chapter 4 describes the process. In verses 1 through 4 he says: "Where do wars and fights among you come from? Do they not come from your lusts that war in your body? You lust and do not have, so you kill. You desire to have and cannot obtain. You fight and war. Yet you do not have, because you do not ask. You ask, and do not receive, because you ask amiss, that you may spend it on your passions. You adulterers and adulteresses, do you not know that the friendship with the world is enmity with God? Whoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God."

This is the human condition that needs revival, whether the revival is corporate or individual. Humanity is in this shape because of the law of sin described by Paul in Romans 7:14-8:2. Lust is what keeps us inordinately attached to the things of the world. Peter speaks of having escaped the corruption that is in this world through lust (see 2 Pet. 1:4). The things that we are excessively attached to are not the problem. In themselves, then can even be good things. We are the problem. When we realize this, we see that we have tried to change in all the wrong ways. Changing what is outside of us does not change our basic dysfunctional relationship to things themselves. Lust remains and so does the dysfunctional condition of the world that results from this. We're a mess, but there is a light at the end of the tunnel.

In verses 5 and 6, James goes on to say: "Do you think that the Scripture says in vain, 'He yearns jealously for the spirit that lives in us'? But He gives more grace. For this reason it says: 'God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble.'"

The Spirit jealously wants us for Himself, but He also provides greater grace and benefits than what the world offers. The condition for receiving this grace is humility toward God; otherwise, He will not give it to us. Pride is the refusal to be humble toward God. If we refuse, we stay in our mess. First Peter 5:5-7 describes this humility: "Likewise you younger ones, submit yourselves to the elders. Yes, all of you be submissive one to another and clothe yourselves with humility, because 'God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble.' Humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time. Cast all your care upon Him, because He cares for you."

We rest our minds on God from our lust and anxiety. This is biblical mysticism at its finest.

Verses 7 through 10 in James finish it off: "Therefore submit yourselves to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. Draw near to God, and He will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you double-minded. Grieve and mourn and weep. Let your laughter be turned to mourning, and your joy to dejection. Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and He will lift you up."

Again, we make the first conscious move of humbly drawing near to God; and then, He draws near to us. He brought us to this point, but we have to respond and submit ourselves to Him because our own strength is insufficient to resist temptation and the devil. Then we can successfully resist.

The remaining verses are important because they tell us to stop trying to use our own devices to lift ourselves out of

our misery. We need to back off from what we have been trying to do for bettering ourselves without God. He does a much better job of lifting and exalting us from our mess than we could ever do without Him. All of this grace is funneled to us from the Father through the Spirit of His Son Jesus Christ that is within us by our faith in Him. This is why we need Jesus; without Him, this is not possible. He is the one mediator of all of these graces. He made this available for us by His death and resurrection, at Pentecost, "For in Him lives all the fullness of the Godhead bodily. And you are complete in Him, who is the head of all authority and power" (Col. 2:9-10).

Humility toward the biblical God is missing in unbiblical spiritualities. A god that is an impersonal force which we are supposed to be born with does not require humility. There is no submitting required if this god is already in us and if we don't recognize the existence of the law of sin within us that battles against our better judgment.

The law of sin indicates our need for getting Christ within us to strengthen us. We all experience the effects of this law whether we believe in its existence or not. If we don't believe that it is there, we will not avail ourselves of God's remedy for it, and it will remain with us, along with its effects. "For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set me free from the law of sin and death" (Rom. 8:2).

Our view of God affects whether we will be saved or not. Going inward to find god prevents us from going outward in unconditional trust in God in order to receive His presence. This is true even if the unbiblical spiritual practices use biblical imagery. Most spiritual practices used in today's Christianity are this way. They all lack the essential element of humility towards the biblical God; therefore, the remedy for the law of sin eludes us and we remain in our sin.

The effects of humility toward Christ is His presence within

us and the fruit of the Spirit listed in Galatians 5:22-24: "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, and self-control; against such there is no law. Those who are Christ's have crucified the flesh with its passions and lusts." The fruit of the Spirit lifts us out of lust, which excessively attaches us to the things of the world. This is true revival. Without it, we are of the world regardless of where we are, even in the most isolated places.

Nature is naturally humble toward God and points us to Him. It does not point us to itself for peace. Humans, on the other hand, are not quite clear on this concept and divert themselves to nature spirituality which cannot lift us out of the law of sin. Saint Paul, in Romans 1:25, refers to this as worshipping and serving the creature, rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever. Amen.

You can download Peter Aiello's book, Hidden Treasure by visiting his web site: .

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