

6 Things That Must Happen to Bring Revival

With a culture saturated by political correctness and relativism, we are inclined to ask if there is any hope for America. If we continue down this slippery slope, there is little hope.

Apart from a national spiritual awakening, it will be difficult to turn the Titanic around—the vessel has been struck; what's inside is spilling out. But if God brings revival ... if we once again set our hearts and minds on Him, there is tremendous hope.

In churches across America, crowd appeal and pleasing the masses tends to be the goal rather than calling out destructive lifestyles, which can result in revival and renewal.

Here are six things that must occur:

1. Recognize the desperate need for truth: Absolute truth is a hill on which to die. In battle, there are key strongholds that must be taken, or kept, at all costs in order to win—these are “hills on which to die.” Today, absolute truth is one such hill. A weapon of destruction has set its sights on our nation, our homes, and our families.

Relativism/postmodernism continue to challenge truth, but to their own destruction. Attacking absolute truth is like waging war on a lighthouse. It cannot be negotiated, bargained with, or debated.

When people, groups, denominations, or movements depart from absolute truth, and thus, quench and grieve the Spirit of God, they become mechanical in their approach to Christianity and lose the ability to guide. The Word of God is not “in their

hearts like a burning fire,” but relative, powerless, and debatable. This is what we see today; many are not truly worshiping God, as Jesus said, “in spirit and in truth.”

Unfortunately, Christians who are sounding the alarm are often categorized as irrational, judgmental, bigoted, and intolerant. But how can we warn if we won’t confront? We are not called to make truth tolerable, but to make it clear.

2. Recognize the desperate need for love: Will others know that we are Jesus’ disciples by how well we translate the Greek or unravel the Hebrew? Will they know by how many Scriptures we quote, or how often we read the Bible? The answer is a resounding, “No”. Jesus said that love, not knowledge, is the characteristic of a genuine disciple.

Please don’t misunderstand, I love theology, but it’s possible to be “Bible taught,” but not “Spirit led”—straight as a gun barrel theologically, but just as empty—“the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life.” This is fertile ground for modern-day Pharisees. How often are we taught to fast and pray for wisdom? How often are we taught the need for brokenness and repentance instead of how to dissect and translate the Greek—more concerned about a Master’s Degree than a degree from the Master? We must equally balance truth and love.

3. Recognize the desperate need for holiness: Holiness is not a prudish, outdated word. It means being set apart, or separated from anything that causes us to sin, whether mentally (in what we think), or physically (in what we do). Holiness begins in the heart. We should continually strive for holiness in all that we do and say. “The Holy Spirit is first of all a moral flame. It is not an accident of language that He is called the Holy Spirit, for whatever else the word holy may mean it does undoubtedly carry with it the idea of moral purity” (Tozer).

Why walk willingly into the enemy’s camp? Why quench and

grieve the Spirit of God? It's impossible to develop a deep respect and desire for God if we repeatedly fill our mind with things that oppose Him. "The gratification of the flesh and the fullness of the Spirit do not go hand in hand" (R.A. Torrey). "For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks" (Matthew 12:34). What goes in, ultimately comes out. It's time to recognize the desperate need for holiness, beginning within our homes.

4. Recognize the desperate need for prayer: A prayerless Christian is a powerless Christian. Where are those with uncompromising spiritual power in the church today? Granted, there are some, and I so appreciate them, but as a whole, the church is lacking.

E.M. Bounds, who was born in 1835, began his three-hour prayer routine at 4am. To him, prayer was not a prelude; it was a priority. Edward Payson, who ministered during the Second Great Awakening, was said to have wore grooves into his hardwood floors as a result of prayer. Adonia Judson attributed his success in Burma as a missionary to a life of prayer, as did J. Hudson Taylor, founder of the China Inland Mission. George Mueller petitioned God for millions of dollars to fund his orphanages in the 1800s. John Fletcher, one of the leaders of the Methodist movement, "stained the walls of his room with the breath of his prayers" until his death in 1785. The men, and women, who do the most for God are always people of prayer.

5. Recognize the desperate need for power: The Holy Spirit is not some weird, mystical force; He's part of the triune nature of God. He enables and empowers us to hunger and thirst for righteousness and to boldly live for Christ. God's Word becomes living and active in the life of the believer who is continually filled with the Holy Spirit. Charles Spurgeon said it best, "What can a hammer do without the hand that grasps it, and what can we do without the Spirit of God?"

D.L. Moody was deeply saddened by Bible teachers in his day, asking, *"Why don't they see that the power of the Holy Spirit is the one thing that they themselves need?"* Like many today, they did not recognize their need for a mighty filling of the Holy Spirit.

Why don't many see their need for the Spirit's power? Perhaps the most common answer is pride. Many do not want to admit that there may be something lacking. It's difficult to endorse what we've never experienced. I believe that we have all of the Holy Spirit, but does He have all of us? This is a crucial step to experiencing revival.

6. Recognize the desperate need for Christ: If current statistics hold true, many will continue to reject Christ, never to return; or, they will embrace a glamorized Christianity, both to the same end. Life is a battleground, not a playground! Who is Jesus? How you answer this question is the difference between right and wrong, light and darkness, heaven and hell. When asked this question, the apostle Peter gave the correct response: "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God" (Matthew 16:16). Jesus Himself confirmed this by saying: "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me" (John 14:6).

Jesus said that whoever believes in Him will (not might) experience "rivers of living water" flowing out of them (cf. John 7:38). This is revival. If you are not experiencing this abundant life, you're not fully connected to the true source of spiritual life. Fully surrender your life today and experience personal revival.

Why don't we experience revival? Here is a sermon outlining seven things needed for it to happen. {eo}

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