

Greg Laurie: This Is Why We Don't See Revival

Almost 50 years ago, a great spiritual awakening known as the Jesus Movement swept across America. *Time* magazine called it the "Jesus Revolution", which is interesting, considering it was during the time of a sexual revolution as well. Moral standards were replaced with "free love," and sexual promiscuity was wildly rampant. And let's not forget about the drug revolution that took over the country as well.

The Beatles led the charge on this, starting with their early hit "I Want to Hold Your Hand" and then on to "I'd Love to Turn You On." Things got even darker in America, especially in 1968. Civil rights leader Martin Luther King Jr. was assassinated in April, and just two months later, presidential hopeful Robert F. Kennedy was shot and killed. He was the brother of President John Kennedy, who was shot and killed in Dallas in 1963.

The country was reeling.

God decided to send a Jesus revolution, and let me tell you—it changed America dramatically, and in many ways, it saved an entire generation. It seems to me it's time for another spiritual revival. As believers, we want God to heal our land and change our nation for the better, but as we look at the problems in our country, it's sometimes easier to just point at someone else. We say the problems in our country are because of the White House or Hollywood, but God says the source of the problems is actually His house, the church.

God lays out His prescription in 2 Chronicles 7:14: "If My people, who are called by My name, will humble themselves and pray, and seek My face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin and will

heal their land.” Notice God says, “If My people who are called by My name ...”

He doesn't say a thing about secular culture. He talks to His own people—that's you and me. We don't have time to point fingers when we're picking up our crosses and following after Him.

There's no doubt that America needs another spiritual awakening, but the church needs a revival just as much. We often use the words “revival” and “awakening” interchangeably, but there is a distinction. An awakening is when a nation comes alive spiritually—when it sees its need for God and turns to Him. A revival is when God's people come back to life again. Revival simply means “to restore.” It's time for the church to wake up and shine its light into a dark world.

“Wake up, sleeper, rise from the dead, and Christ will shine on you” (Eph. 5:14b, NIV).

As C. S. Lewis once pointed out, “A moderately bad man knows he is not very good: a thoroughly bad man thinks he is all right. You understand sleep when you are awake, not while you are sleeping.” In other words, if you think you're a great person with no problems, you are knocked out asleep and don't even realize it.

Revival is a choice to wake up, it's an intentional decision to get back to the Christian life as it was meant to be lived. Revival is being in the bloom of first love for a lifetime, walking closely with the Lord. You can't always have those initial emotions you had as a new believer any more than you can have the same butterflies in your stomach you had when you first met your husband- or wife-to-be. That is unrealistic, but here's the thing: Your love can grow deeper, stronger and bolder, it just takes intentionality.

That is how we ought to be as followers of Jesus. We need the faith of the Christians of the first century who turned the

world upside down. Revival is nothing more or less than a new obedience to God. Or as it has been described, “a long obedience in the same direction.”

Only God can send an awakening to America, but I believe whole-heartedly that revival can happen right here, right now. May it start with you and me.

Back in the days of the Jesus Movement, we used to do mass baptisms at Pirate’s Cove beach in Southern California.

Thousands showed up, and hundreds would be baptized.

Major news outlets showed up and did feature stories on this phenomenon.

We just held a baptism in September of this year, and we baptized over 550 people. It seems to me, if we want to see revival again, we should do “revival-like” things. {eo}

Greg Laurie is the pastor of Harvest Christian Fellowship in Southern California and is also the evangelist for the Harvest Crusades. Over 500,000 people have made professions of faith at these large-scale evangelistic events. Laurie is also the author of the newly released book, *Jesus Revolution* that he wrote with New York Times best-selling author Ellen Vaughn.