

# REVIVAL - A PERSPECTIVE ON GOD ROCKING OUR WORLD

## INTRODUCTION

- A. Revival is personal.
1. Revival is experience matched to truth - it is living what you believe.
  2. I will share more about personal revival experiences later.
  3. Quotes that raise the need for personal renewal
    - a. St. Augustine said about God, *You have made us for Yourself, and our hearts are restless until they find their rest in You.*
    - b. C.S. Lewis, *Our longing is for intimacy with God...What we want is what we were created to have. To be who we were created to be. To live and laugh and love with the One who created us to do all of that - and more!*
- B. Revival is God's will.
1. John 4:23, *But an hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers shall worship the Father in spirit and truth; for such people the Father seeks to be His worshipers.*
  2. Jesus' cried from the cross
    - a. *My God, my God, what have You forsaken Me?*
    - b. *It is finished.*
- C. Revival is possible because of regeneration.
1. John 5:39-40, *You search the Scriptures, because you think that in them you have eternal life; and it is these that bear witness of Me; and you are unwilling to come to Me, that you may have life.*
  2. Eternal life is knowing God through Jesus Christ
  3. Share personal experience of salvation.
- D. Revival is a personal choice.
- a. Matthew 6:33, *But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness..*
  - b. Oswald Chambers said, *It is a bad thing to be satisfied spiritually.*
  - c. Romans 12:1, *Therefore, I urge you, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship.*
- C. Revival is centered in the nature of God.
1. He is transcendent - He is not bound by His creation
    - a. McCullough, *God is different-fundamentally different-from anything we could have imagined, from any god we might have created for ourselves. The biblical word for this difference is holy.*
    - b. 1 John 1:5
    - c. A glimpse of God's nature from C.S. Lewis' description of Aslan in *The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe*, "*Is-is he a man?*" asked Lucy.  
*"Aslan a man!" said Mr. Beaver sternly. "Certainly not. I tell you he is the King of the wood and the son of the great Emperor-Beyond-the-Sea. Don't you know who is the King of the Beasts? Aslan is a lion-the Lion, the great Lion."*  
*"Ooh!" said Susan. "I'd thought he was a man. Is he-quite safe? I shall feel rather nervous about meeting a lion."*  
*"That you will, dearie, and no mistake," said Mrs. Beaver. "If there's anyone who can appear before Aslan without their knees knocking, they're either braver than most or else just silly."*  
*"Then he isn't safe?" said Lucy.*  
*"Safe?" said Mr. Beaver. "Don't you hear what Mrs. Beaver tells you? Who said anything about safe? "Course he isn't safe. But he's good. He's the King, I tell you."*
  - d. Personal experience of God should be centered on the premise that God is not safe but good, very good.
  - e. God's holiness should remind us that we are unholy.
2. He is immanent - He chooses to interact with His creation - and it is based solely on grace
  - a. The temple veil is a beautiful picture of the access we now have to a holy but accessible God.
  - b. If I have placed my trust in Christ alone, how close I am to God is my choice.

- c. A.W. Tozer, *Every man is as close to God as he wants to be.*
- d. Paul's goal was to know Christ, Philippians 3:8-10, *More than that, I regard everything as loss because of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have suffered the loss of all things, and I regard them as rubbish, in order that I may gain Christ and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but one that comes through faith in Christ, the righteousness from God based on faith. I want to know Christ and the power of his resurrection and the sharing of his sufferings by becoming like him in his death,*
- e. Henry Blackaby, *God is more interested in a love relationship with you than in what you can do for Him...I think God is crying out and shouting to us. "Don't just do something. Stand there! Enter into a love relationship with Me. Adjust your life to Me. Let Me love you and reveal Myself to you as I work through you.*

3. The cross - the perfect picture of God's nature - transcendence and immanence.

<b>GOD ROCKS OUR WORLD</b>
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A. Revival Notes

- 1. Dr. Martyn Lloyd-Jones, *I am profoundly convinced that the greatest need in the world today is revival in the Church of God. Yet alas! the whole idea of revival seems to have become strange to so many good Christian people. There are some who even seem to resent the very idea, and actually speak and write against it. Such an attitude is due to both a serious misunderstanding of the Scriptures, and to a woeful ignorance of the history of the Church. Anything therefore that can instruct God's people in this matter is very welcome.*
- 2. Patterns of revival (from *Christian History*, vol. 23)
  - a. *They are usually preceded by a time of spiritual depression, apathy and gross sin.*
    - 1) *Nominal Christians are hardly different from members of secular society.*
    - 2) *Churches seem to be asleep.*
  - b. *An individual or small group of God's people becomes conscious of their sins and backslidden condition with vows to forsake all that displeases God.*
  - c. *An awakening of Christians who desire to experience God's power as a result of their awareness of God's holiness, resulting in deepened spiritual lives.*
  - d. *Revival may be God's means of preparing and strengthening His people for future challenges or trials.*

B. Revival in the Bible

- 1. In the Old Testament
  - a. King Jehoshaphat, 2 Kings 11 - 12
  - b. King Hezekiah, 2 Kings 18
  - c. King Asa, 2 Chronicles 15
  - d. King Josiah, 2 Kings 22 - 23
  - e. Zerubbabel, Ezra 5 - 6
  - f. Nehemiah, Nehemiah 8 - 9, 13
- 2. In the New Testament
  - a. Pentecost, Acts 2
  - b. Persecutions, Acts 4:23-27

C. Revival in America

- 1. Beginnings
  - a. Solomon Stoddard
    - 1) He was pastor at First Church of Northampton, Massachusetts for 60 years until his death in 1729.
    - 2) Revival began in America began through his ministry which focused on reaching the unconverted and promoting spiritual growth.
    - 3) *When Men don't preach about the Danger of Damnation, there is want of good preaching. Some Preachers preach much about Moral Duties and the blessed estate of Godly Men, but don't seek to awaken Sinners and make them sensible of their Danger.*
    - d) He believed there would be periods of spiritual drought followed by great spiritual activity.
    - e) Stoddard was followed by his grandson, Jonathan Edwards.

- 2) Theodore Jacob Frelinghuysen
  - a) His persistent evangelism set the stage for the Great Awakening in the Middle Colonies in 1740.
  - b) He stressed personal conversion and a life of obedient faith and love.
  - c) He was dismayed by the lack of spirituality in his congregation, *...while horse racing, gambling, dissipation, and rudeness of various kinds were common, the [church] was attended at convenience, and religion consisted of the mere formal pursuit of the routine of duty.*

## 2. The First Great Awakening

### a. Jonathan Edwards

- 1) Stressed evangelism in 1734 with a series of sermons on justification by faith.
- 2) *The Spirit of God began extraordinarily to set in and wonderfully work among us...This Work of God, as...the Number of true saints multiplied, soon made a glorious Alteration in the Town; so that in the spring and summer following, Anno 1735, the Town seemed to be full of the Presence of God; it was never so full of Love, nor of Joy, and yet so full of distress, as it was then. There were remarkable Tokens of God's Presence in almost every House. It was a time of Joy in families on account of Salvation being brought unto them...More than 300 Souls were savingly brought home to Christ, in this Town, in the Space of half a Year.*
- 3) Selected resolutions
  - a) *...I will do whatsoever I think to be most to God's glory...*
  - b) *to do whatever I think to be my duty, and most for the good and advantage of mankind in general.*
  - c) *Never to do any thing, which I should be afraid to do, if it were the last hour of my life.*
  - d) *Never hence-forward, till I die, to act as if I were any way my own, but entirely and altogether God's.*
- 4) Quote from his most famous sermon, "Sinners in the Hands of An Angry God," Deut. 32:35. *The bow of God's wrath is bent, and the arrow made ready on the string, and justice bends the arrow at your heart, and strains the bow, and it is nothing but the mere pleasure of God, and that of an angry God, without any promise or obligation at all, that keeps the arrow one moment from being made drunk with your blood. Thus all you that never passed under a great change of heart, by the mighty power of the Spirit of God upon your souls; all you that were never born again, and made new creatures, and raised from being dead in sin, to a state of new, and before altogether unexperienced, light and life, are in the hands of an angry God. However you may have reformed your life in many things, and may have had religious affections, and may keep up a form of religion in your families and closets, and in the house of God, it is nothing but His mere pleasure that keeps you from being this moment swallowed up in everlasting destruction.*

### b. George Whitefield

- 1) An Anglican priest who was converted through the friendship of Charles Wesley.
- 2) First to be called a *Methodist* by students at Oxford University who made fun of his small group that met for prayer and Bible study, went to church and helped the poor.
- 3) He was not permitted to preach in many churches so he spoke in open fields, barns, and courthouses.
- 4) His farewell sermon in Boston, 1740, was heard by 20,000.

### c. Francis Asbury

- 1) Responded to John Wesley's call to come to America.
- 2) He was placed in charge of the Methodist congregations and preachers in America in 1772.
- 3) Promoted the Methodist practice of traveling preachers or circuit riders.
- 4) Estimated that Asbury preached over 16,000 sermons, ordained more than 4,000 preachers, traveled on horseback 270,000 miles, and wore out 6 horses.

## 3. The Second Great Awakening

### a. Timothy Dwight

- 1) Grandson of Jonathan Edwards, became president of Yale in 1795.
- 2) Revival broke out under his administration and direction in 1802, 1808, 1812, and 1815.
- 3) Revival also broke out at Princeton, Williams, Amherst, and Hampden-Sydney.

### b. Charles G. Finney (1792 - 1875)

- 1) A school teacher who turned to the study of law.
- 2) Converted in 1821 and became a Presbyterian home missionary and evangelist.
- 3) He later pastored Broadway Tabernacle in New York and then became president of Oberlin College.

- 4) One of the greatest evangelists in American history.
  - a) He called aloud the names of known sinners.
  - b) Used public invitation, “aisle test of Christianity.”
  - c) His Rochester Revival of 1831 was responsible for a nationwide revival.
    - 1] Taverns closed.
    - 2] District attorney declared that crime rate dropped by two-thirds and stayed that way for years.

c. *The Benevolent Empire*

- 1) It emphasized abolition of slavery.
- 2) The Second Great Awakening emphasized the need to clean up society.
- 3) This was pursued by the development of volunteer societies which included:
  - a) American Bible Society (1816)
  - b) American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions (1810)
  - c) American Sunday School Union (1817)
  - d) American Tract Society (1826)

4. The Third Great Awakening - Layman’s Prayer Revival (1857 - 1859)

- a. Estimates of conversions are listed between three hundred thousand and one million.
- b. Characterized by prayer not preaching and dominance of lay leadership.
- c. Almost universal lack of emotional excesses that so deeply characterized the Second Great Awakening.
- d. Use of large prayer meetings in the major cities, with hundreds of businessmen desiring to pray. A quote from the New York Times (20 March 1858): *It is not often that the Daily Press feels called upon to chronicle the spiritual movements of the public mind. The great wave of religious excitement which is now sweeping over the nation is one of the most remarkable movements since the Reformation...In this city we have beheld a sight which not the most enthusiastic fanatics for church observances could have ever hoped to look upon: we have seen in a business quarter of the city, in the busiest hours, assemblies of merchants, clerks, and working men, to the number of some 5,000, gathered day after day for simple solemn worship. Similar assemblies we find in other portions of the city, a theatre is turned into a chapel; churches of all sects are opened and crowded day and night.*

5. Revival perspectives

- a. Revival is the responsibility of the redeemed.
- b. Evangelism is a byproduct of revival.
- c. Revival can be uncomfortable.
- d. Revival is desperately needed today.

C. Revival in my world

1. Life in the shadows

- a. Searching for life and peace
  - 1) *I want that.*
  - 2) A Christian living in the shadows can never be satisfied.
- b. Fear of death
  - 1) Romans 8:6, *To set the mind on the flesh is death, but to set the mind on the Spirit is life and peace.*
  - 2) It is never too late to move from darkness to the light.
- c. Praying for revival that will transform Christians from self-centered to Christ-centered.

D. Revival in your world

1. A promise of spiritual vitality

- a. Rev. 3:20, *Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and eat with him, and he with me.*
- b. John 7:37, *If anyone thirst, let him come to Me and drink. He who believes in Me, as the Scripture said, ‘From his innermost being shall flow rivers of living water.’*
- c. Does my spiritual life resemble that what was promised by our Savior?

- d. Are you parched and don't know it?
- 2. A commitment to spiritual vitality
  - a. It is meditating on God Who loves you.
    - 1) He is transcendent yet immanent.
    - 2) The cross proves God wants to commune with you.
    - 3) If you have placed your faith in Christ, you have signposts of God's work in your life.
  - b. It is loving God Who loves you.
    - 1) Living water flows from a heart in love with God, 1 Cor. 2:9, *But, as it is written, "What no eye has seen, nor ear heard, nor the heart of man imagined, what God has prepared for those who love him.*
    - 2) Jesus' basic plan for spiritual satisfaction is Mat. 22:37-39, *You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the great and first commandment. And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself.*
    - 3) The psalmist clearly expressed a heart for God that will produce spiritual vitality, Psalm 73:25-26, *Whom have I in heaven but you? And there is nothing on earth that I desire besides you. My flesh and my heart may fail, but God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever.*
  - c. It is submitting to the Holy Spirit.
    - 1) Every believer is indwelt by the Holy Spirit, Rom. 8:9, *You, however, are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if in fact the Spirit of God dwells in you. Anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him.*
    - 2) Every believer is commanded to be filled by the Holy Spirit, Eph. 5:18, *And do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery, but be filled with the Spirit.*
  - d. It is pursuing spiritual disciplines.
    - 1) Persevere - Bernard of Clairvaux, *Never despair of finding Him...Seek Him by desire, follow Him through action, and in faith you will find Him.*
    - 2) Pray - Basil, *Only pray that our life may be ordered to the advantage of our soul.*
    - 3) Be Passionate - *The core problem is not that we are too passionate about bad things, but that we are not passionate enough about good things." Has the Word of God become your passion? Howard Hendricks*
    - 4) Pore through Scripture - *As in paradise, God walks in the Holy Scriptures, seeking man. Ambrose*
    - 5) Prioritize
      - a) Husband - love your wife and wife - love your husband.
      - b) Parents - love your children.
      - c) Elders - love your flock.
  - e. It is a personal choice!

<b>CONCLUSION</b>
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- A. God loves you.
- B. God wants you.
- C. Choose life.