

Desiring Revival



From Desiring Revival

"Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness" - Isaiah 5:20. We live in a generation where this truth has been exemplified in the many avenues of human interaction. Whether in the topic of morality, human sexuality or in the name of justice. Yet it is not the world that defines good but God who has given us His truth in the Scriptures, and the Church is to be the pillar and ground of the truth. This warning is for the Church for the world knows nothing of what truth and right is, but they follow the vain desires of their heart. Where is the Church today that calls good good and evil evil and sets the distinction? In the book of Acts the Church lived in stark contrast to the world, for their lifestyle was the good that reflected the truth which was from God and the world hated it. They were persecuted, tortured, put in prison or beheaded.

The Church today has lost its light because she has forgotten her foundational truths which were built upon Christ which guided her through the ages. The need of our day is to not only to pray for a heaven-sent revival but also realign ourselves with the forgotten truths of the past no matter how hard it may go against our status quo. If not we are just a social club inoculating the people against the truth and in its final verdict, bankrupt.

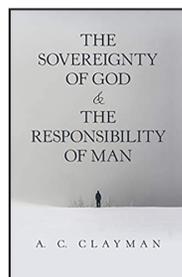
Quotes to Ponder

I'll tell you the secret of getting revival in the Church. Find half-a-dozen people that know how to groan in prayer.

- Leonard Ravenhill

Any doctrine that makes the world your friend is not your friend. Any doctrine that makes it easy for you to hobnob with the world and world's ways, to accept the world's values and do things the way the world does, is not of God; it cannot possibly be.

- A. W. Tozer



A Most Holy God

O Sovereign Lord, awful in majesty,
Thou who dwellest in the bliss of eternity,
Whose beauty inexplicably splendid,
Whose power reaches

through time and space,

A most Holy God, whose angels are not pure in His sight,

Grant us we pray a glimpse of thy beauty that we may worship thee in the beauty of holiness,
As a dew which shares a glimpse of the infinite source from which it came.

Pleasure - Thomas Brooks

Pleasure is a beautiful harlot sitting in her chariot. The four wheels are pride, gluttony, lust and foolishness. The two horses are prosperity and abundance. The two drivers are idleness and security. Her attendants and followers are guilt, grief, shame, and often death and damnation!

Many great men, and many strong men, and many rich men, and many hopeful men, and many young men have come to their damnation by her; but never any enjoyed full satisfaction and contentment in her.

Ah! Avoid this harlot 'pleasure', and come not near the door of her house!



The Revival of 1859 helped to lay the foundations of the modern international and interdenominational missionary structure. Every revival of religion in the homelands is felt within a decade in the foreign mission fields, and the records of missionary enterprises and the pages of missionary biography following 1860 are full of clearest evidence of the stimulating effect of the Revival throughout the world. - J. Edwin Orr

"and there arose another generation after them, which knew not the Lord, nor yet the works which he had done for Israel." - Judges 2:10



Clippings from the new series on "Forgotten Truths for This Generation"

Unction / Fullness of the Spirit

We see a pattern in the Scriptures on how great exploits were done when people were filled with the Holy Spirit, be it Samson, Elisha or the disciples in the book of Acts. We see multiple fillings similar to Pentecost (Acts 2:1-4) given for service in Luke 1:15,41,67, Acts 4:8,31, 7:55, 13:9, 19:2,6 and this was not a gradual process. The disciples in Acts 1 already had the indwelling Spirit when the risen Christ breathed on them in John 20:22 to "receive ye the Holy Ghost". John R. Rice in his book "The Charismatic Movement" explains "... there is deadness in the Plymouth Brethren position about the Holy Spirit. If you simply tell people, "You already have all there is; if you just obey the Lord, that is all you can do now to be useful," then people do not wait on God nor seek nor pray for the mighty power of God for soul-winning. That means there will be no great evangelists among people who hold very clearly to the teachings of Plymouth Brethren on the Holy Spirit."

ICHABOD

It is a state where there can be much activity but no progress, much preaching but no praying, much exhorting but no weeping, much talk about the reality of Christ but no moving's of the person of Christ, many avenues of outreach but prevalent barrenness. In all this there is a core element that is missing, the power of the Holy Ghost. The glory has departed from the Church when the world can sneer at the powerlessness of the Church and get away with it; can compare Christianity to any other religion and not really tell the difference; can excel in the superficial but lack in the supernatural; can have numbers but have no reflection of the holiness of God in its people; can be rich in goods but just exists as another religion; can blend well with the world where it can coexist with no friction; is looking to politics for regaining its voice; can function without nights of prayer, fasting and tears; is only a news item for exposing of sin in its ranks, is unable to discern her plight. Ichabod means death and with all the advancements of the gospel witness that we have tried do we see any lasting impact on the nation to move her to God or has our message been compromised that the Spirit has left us?

The Inconveniences of an Awakening

There is almost a desire for revival for the sake of the name or the fantasized results of what we think will happen. We think revival will be painless, giving Christians the much-needed voice they "hope" to get in the secular world. But genuine revival has many inconveniences. If we imagine a time where God moves us to fast, pray, weep and lose sleep for days and weeks for the coming revival would that be appealing to the flesh? There was always a cost associated with real historic revival; prayer, travail, tears, repentance, brokenness, forsaking worldliness, entertainment, sports, etc. Revival is a work of God that hinders the flesh. There may be persecutions, arrests and martyrdom, are we ready for that? Yes, there may be restoration and healing but we cannot predict the outcomes. The intensity of the revival, the labor and burdens, the ask will be great for God to come. Before we say Lord send us revival, we need to ask do I really want one and am I willing to pay the cost for it. Do you really want revival?

O Lord, I have heard thy speech, and was afraid: O Lord, revive thy work in the midst of the years, in the midst of the years make known; in wrath remember mercy

- Habakkuk 3:2

Revival is seeking God for God Himself and not for what He can do for us. It is as stated by the Welsh divines as "Revival is God visiting His garden"



The Gospel Witness

The truth of the Gospel is not in the declaration of it but in the result of it. The gospel is the power of God unto salvation. But it must be preached with the Spirit of Christ and not in the spirit of Adam. The Spirit of Christ brings life, the spirit of Adam brings death. A cult that adheres to some semblance of Christianity but teaches strange doctrines is simply God's word overlapped with man's word and preference given to man's interpretation of it, resulting in dead works. The demonstration of the gospel is not in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance. A man who has submitted to the claims of the gospel and seen God's work in regenerating him will never be the same again. A lack of change on the part of someone who believes the gospel witness is given the admonition in the Scriptures to examine himself whether he be in the faith. It is high time that we as a Church exhort those who show no evident fruits of regeneration to examine themselves as unbelievers rather than give them assurance and inoculate them to the truth by calling them as Christians.

The Missing Jewel of Prayer

The power of a Church or a Christian is exhibited by the life of prayer. Christ's life was a life that was dominated by prayer. His zeal was not that His house shall be called a house of singing or preaching or fellowshiping, it was to be called a house of prayer of all nations. Prayers that are embedded with heartfelt cry towards God can change the course of a nation and a Church that is headed for destruction. Prayer first changes the person within before it changes the events that are external to the individual. God's desire is the purity of the inner man before He deals with the outer circumstances. Prayer shows a dependence upon God for His Holy Spirit and His working in our midst knowing that without Him we can do nothing. When we lack prayer, our motive speaks for itself that we know what to do and we don't need God. Thus, America suffers from the powerlessness of the Church and the Church has become a place for breeding goats and starving the sheep. One of the most strenuous tasks that requires blood and sweat is to disciple a goat who thinks they are a sheep.

Same God, different results?

If the backslidden Peter got right with God and preached in the power of the Spirit on Pentecost and saw 3000 get saved in one sermon, how can we have millions of sermons, book resources, blogs, internet, websites, commentaries, the completed canon of Scripture and maybe thousands claiming to be filled with the Holy Spirit, how can we not see the same or greater results? In the first century the disciples didn't have the New Testament, didn't have finances, didn't have Church buildings, didn't have a degree, didn't have political support or religious approval and yet they turned the world upside down. Jesus said "greater works than these shall he do" in John 14:12. In the book of Acts it was either revival, imprisonment, persecution or martyrdom. No matter where the apostle Paul went either communities got transformed or they got chased out, there was no middle ground. If we claim to serve the same God, then why are we seeing different results?

The Object of Worship

In "singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord." (Colossians 3:16) our singing should really be prayers or praises directed to God in the form of lyrics. The primary focus of special music (of itself) is not to edify the people or prepare their hearts for the preaching of the word but rather to focus the hearers eye of faith to look upon God. The primary goal of worship in a congregation or a special is to focus our attention to the object of our worship, God. When God is desired in such manner in all aspects of the service then God purifies the hearts of His people by the Holy Spirit to hear from heaven through the Spirit filled preaching of His word. Thus, in the finality of this interaction the focus is on God alone. When this is our motive the Spirit can have free course to work in our midst. The result of such worship would be an awareness of the manifest presence of God. The more we are made aware of someone's talent or ability in any aspect of the service the less we are aware of God.

Revival

The word "revival" in today's Christianity evokes the preplanned method of meeting for a week and making decisions. It is something we can schedule, control and soon forgotten. In historic revivals that I read of, it is generally never scheduled, the community is suddenly made aware of the manifest presence of God, time is forgotten as God is in the midst, there are spontaneous bursts of worship followed by a torrent of witnessing, conviction, salvation and many acts which are beyond the control of the people but under the perfect control of the Holy Spirit in Divine disorder, sin is arrested in the community, there is no exaltation of human personality or ability. Our generation has not seen one and we have been made comfortable to live without it.

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Continued from the previous issue ...

What is Prayer - Watchman Nee



Prayer does not change what God has ordained. Prayer never changes anything. Prayer only accomplishes what God has ordained. On the contrary, the lack of prayer and the absence of prayer changes things. When God's people do not work together with God, He will allow many of the things ordained by Him to be delayed and not be fulfilled. "Verily I say unto you, Whatever ye shall bind on earth shall have been bound in heaven: and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven" (Matt. 18:18). These two sentences are very familiar to us. But they refer to prayer. This is why following this, it says, "Again I say unto you, That if two of you shall agree on earth as touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven." (v. 19).

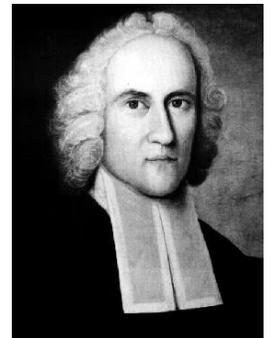
This passage explains clearly the relationship between prayer and God's work. God in heaven will only bind and loose what His children on earth have bound and loosed. Many things that God should bind, He will not bind alone; instead He wants His people to bind them on earth first, and then He binds them in heaven. Many things that should be loosed, God will not loose them alone; instead He has to wait for His people to loose them on earth before He will loose the same for them in heaven. Every action in heaven is directed on the earth! All the moves in heaven are restricted on the earth! God is willing and happy to let all of His works be managed by His people. (I am not saying such words to fleshly persons, for they are not qualified to hear such words. We should listen carefully, lest the flesh comes in, and we offend God even more.)

"I am not asking whether you know things about Him but do you know God, are you enjoying God, is God the center of your life, the soul of your being, the source of your greatest joy? He is meant to be.

- D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones

Excerpts from Jonathan Edwards Narrative of the Great Awakening

I therefore proceed to give an account of the manner of persons being wrought upon; and here there is a vast variety, perhaps as manifold as the subjects of the operation; but yet in many things there is a great analogy in all. Persons are first awakened with a sense of their miserable condition by nature, the danger they are in of perishing eternally, and that it is of great importance to them that they speedily escape and get into a better state. Those who before were secure and senseless, are made sensible how much they were in the way to ruin, in their former courses. Some are more suddenly seized with convictions-it may be, by the news of others' conversion, or some thing they hear in public, or in private conference-their consciences are smitten, as if their hearts were pierced through with a dart. Others are awakened more gradually, they begin at first to be something more thoughtful and considerate, so as to come to a conclusion in their minds, that it is their best and wisest way to delay no longer, but to improve the present opportunity. They have accordingly set themselves seriously to meditate on those things that have the most awakening tendency, on purpose to obtain convictions; and so their awakenings have increased, till a sense of their misery, by God's Holy Spirit setting in therewith, has had fast hold of them. Others who before had been somewhat religious, and concerned for their salvation, have been awakened in a new manner; and made sensible that their slack and dull way of seeking, was never like to attain that purpose.



These awakenings when they have first seized on persons, have had two effects; one was, that they have brought them immediately to quit their sinful practices; and the looser sort have been brought to forsake and dread their former vices and extravagances. When once the Spirit of God began to be so wonderfully poured out in a general way through the town, people had soon done with their old quarrels, backbitings, and intermeddling with other men's matters. The tavern was soon left empty, and persons kept very much at home; none went abroad unless on necessary business, or on some religious account, and every day seemed in many respects like a Sabbath-day. The other effect was, that it put them on earnest application to the means of salvation, reading, prayer, meditation, the ordinances of God's house, and private conference; their cry was, What shall we do to be saved? The place of resort was now altered, it was no longer the tavern, but the minister's house that was thronged far more than ever the tavern had been wont to be.

Filled with the Spirit by F. B. Meyer



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There is no formal conclusion to the book of Acts, because God meant the story to be prolonged through the ages, after the same manner. Let us not think that God resembles some, who put a portico of marble to a building which they finish with common brick. He did not give an experience at Pentecost which He either would not or could not maintain. Pentecost was simply meant to be the specimen and type of all the days of all the years of the present age. And if our times seem to have fallen far below this blessed level, it is not because of any failure on God's part, but because the Church has neglected this holy doctrine. Christians have seemed to suppose that the filling of the Holy Ghost was the prerogative of a few. The majority of them have never thought of it as within their reach, and the Church has been simply paralyzed for want of the only power that can avail her in her conflict against the world - a power which was distinctly pledged to her by her ascending Lord. We never can regain or hold our true position until all believers see that the filling of the Holy Ghost is equally for them as for the first Christians, and that the barriers are broken down which once limited it to a few. We do not seek the sound of rushing wind, or the coronet of flame, or the special gifts which were conferred for a special purpose: these are the minor accessories of this filling, with which we can dispense. But what we cannot dispense with and must not dream of missing is the distinct filling of the Holy Ghost. No doubt He is in us if we are Christians, but we must never be content until He is in us in power - not a breath, but a mighty wind; not a rill, but a torrent; not an influence, but a mighty, energizing Person.