

Desiring Revival

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from Desiring Revival

Is salvation a work of God or a work of man? This has been the fundamental question through the ages that man has been confronted with. If it is a work of God then it must be God's way, if it is a work of man it must of needs be by the ability and sincerity of man. The apostles, in their amazement, asked, Who then can be saved? (Matt. 19:25), to which Jesus answered, With men this is impossible; but with God all things are possible (v. 26). While we give an intellectual understanding of the impossibility of man to save himself, which is what religion tries to do, we deny in practice when we lead those who come into a pre-formed formula or sinner's prayer where they can save themselves, whenever they please. Those who are truly born again are the ones who have been convicted and feel a sense of their own unworthiness before God, and declare themselves as sinners. Not because of what they have done, but of who they are. And without such conviction by the blessed Spirit of God, there is no hope for one to be converted. Only the truly convicted can repent, and except a man repents, he will in no wise see the kingdom of God (Luke 13:3). No amount of sincerity or making a decision can bring us to the kingdom of God.

While we believe salvation is by grace (Eph. 2:8-9), the teaching of repentance has been nearly lost and buried in our generation. Without repentance, there can be no conversion, and to only believe is only half the truth of what it means to ask God to save oneself. Satan always pushes us to extremes, to "only believe" or to try to earn salvation by "good works." In the realm of revival, we can get caught in the same trap. While it is commonly believed that revival is something only God can do, we deny it in practice when we try to "schedule" it so we can say we have had "revival." All through Christendom, there has never been a way that men could organize and schedule revival. All true revival has been the spontaneous work of God pouring out His Spirit upon the faithful, as He did on the day of Pentecost. Just as God is not willing that any should perish and that whosoever will may come, we realize that salvation is not one-sided, where man can claim it and believe it and go on thinking he is justified before God because of a few promises he has been told to believe. Salvation is a Person, and while the Spirit makes alive the word and brings us to Christ, it is Jesus who saves. In the same way, revival is something only God can do as He draws near to His people. The Welsh divines used to say, "Revival is God visiting His garden." If there was a

formula such as a sinner's prayer, then why did God not record it in the Scriptures? In the same way, if there was a formula that the early church could follow instead of seeking the God of revival to come, then why in God's name was that not recorded in the Scriptures? There is no formula, no shortcuts, no obligation for God to do something because we have kept our side of the bargain, like bartering in a cheap marketplace.

Don't we see the busyness that embodies our day, where we have tried every means to "wake up" God to come and send His reviving work to us? We seem to be doing a lot of work for God, and hoping we can add on revival as a good-to-have in our shallow sense of what it means for God to come. Dear brethren, have we brought God to our level so that we can expect Him to work in our fast-food culture way? God's way has never been according to our convenience. It was in the interest of Abraham that he followed after God, and not that God was getting something because Abraham obeyed Him. We seem to have flipped the narrative, that God is longing and waiting for us, and we have elevated man in the eyes of God, instead of what Job said when He met God: "Behold, I am vile; what shall I answer thee? I will lay mine hand upon my mouth. Once have I spoken; but I will not answer: yea, twice; but I will proceed no further. Wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes." - Job 40:4-5, 42:6.

We serve a God who is nothing more than our imagination and have forgotten the holiness of God, which brings us to the reality of the terror of the Lord, and to have a proper fear of God. There is no sense of the magnitude of meeting God, and our sermons are rife with what's for lunch, and a few jokes to get the people interested in the sermon, but where is the power? And when they leave, all they have heard is some nice sentimental mumbo-jumbo that never leaves them in awe and wonder of the God we serve. The sheep starve while the goats are ready to watch the next hip-shaking halftime show of the god called Super Bowl. Do you see the need? Will you ask God to bring you to the place of brokenness, where He can come and heal? "Come, and let us return unto the Lord: for he hath torn, and he will heal us; he hath smitten, and he will bind us up." - Hosea 6:1.



Thoughts on Revival

"One day Napoleon ran his index finger round a great country; he was talking to his generals, and he said, 'There lies a sleeping giant, LET IT SLEEP!! Because,' he said, 'if that country ever wakes up and harnesses its manpower to its mineral power, it will shake the world.' The country he outlined, in case you are interested, was none other than China, our biggest headache. See the devil standing there; he isn't running his finger round a map; he is running his finger round the church of Jesus Christ, and he says, 'There is the church of Jesus Christ asleep, LET IT SLEEP!!' 'Because if it ever rediscovers the power of the Holy Ghost, if it ever rediscovers the resurrection power of Jesus, it will shake the world.'" - Leonard Ravenhill

"And throughout the story of the Church, throughout the centuries, He has been doing the same thing. The Church has been dying; she has seemed to be finished. Suddenly, He appears, and His enemies are scattered, and the Church is revived. That is what is meant by revival: times of refreshing from the presence of the Lord. That is what revival means: that the Church has another glimpse of the vision. The Church sees Him, and, seeing Him, can smile and laugh at all her enemies. Revival is always His work." - Martyn Lloyd-Jones

"Two profound characteristics marked the Welsh revival. First, waves of conviction drew people to repentance. Often sinners wandered into the meetings and immediately knelt at the altars. Second, Christians felt an urgency to share Christ with everyone around them because of the reality of hell and God's judgment. They seemed almost possessed by the love of God for the unconverted." - J. Lee Grady

"Revival cannot be organized, but we can set our sails to catch the wind from heaven when God chooses to blow upon His people once again." - G. Campbell Morgan

"Perhaps the greatest barrier to revival on a large scale is the fact that we are too interested in a great display. We want an exhibition; God is looking for a man who will throw himself entirely on God. Whenever self-effort, self-glory, self-seeking, or self-promotion enters into the work of revival, then God leaves us to ourselves." - Sadhu Sundar Singh

"In the Irish Revival of 1859, people became so weak that they could not get back to their homes. Men and women would fall by the wayside and would be found hours later pleading with God to save their souls. They felt that they were slipping into hell and that nothing else in life mattered but to get right with God... To them eternity meant everything. Nothing else was of any consequence. They felt that if God did not have mercy on them and save them, they were doomed for all time to come." - Oswald Chambers



FRUITS MEET FOR REPENTANCE

Whatever happened to repentance in preaching?

When John the Baptist began his ministry, he declared, "And saying, Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." - Matthew 3:2. When Jesus began His ministry, "From that time Jesus began to preach, and to say, Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." - Matthew 4:17. When Peter preached His first sermon on the day of Pentecost, "Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost." - Acts 2:38. When the Apostle Paul preached at Athens to the heathen crowd, he declared, "And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent: - Acts 17:30. His ministry was "Testifying both to the Jews, and also to the Greeks, repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ." - Acts 20:21.

We ought to obey the commandment of Christ when He said after His resurrection, "Thus it is written, and thus it behooved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day: And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. And ye are witnesses of these things." - Luke 24:46-48

Without repentance, there is no desire for the heart to be freed from sin, which only comes from true conviction by the work of the Spirit. That is His exclusive office. And those who were converted in Ephesus showed their change by the fruits meet for repentance: "And many that believed came, and confessed, and shewed their deeds. Many of them also which used curious arts brought their books together, and burned them before all men: and they counted the price of them, and found it fifty thousand pieces of silver." - Acts 19:18-19. We see the same with Zaccheus, "And Zacchaeus stood, and said unto the Lord: Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor; and if I have taken any thing from any man by false accusation, I restore him fourfold." - Luke 19:8. If there is no repentance, those who accept Christ just take him as someone in addition to their lives, along with their sin. No submission to Christ, no Lordship, no taking up their cross and following Him, no desire to realize that their body is the temple of the Holy Ghost and they are not their own, no loving acceptance that they are slaves of Jesus Christ, no repentance unto good works, and no fruits meet for repentance. They are still in their lost estate, enemies of God.



The Power of the Blood - David Wilkerson

Without a doubt, the blood of Jesus Christ is the most precious gift our heavenly Father has given to his church. Yet, few Christians understand its value and virtue. They sing about the power of the blood. In fact, the anthem of the Pentecostal church is, "There is power, power, wonder-working power in the precious blood of the Lamb" (Lewis E. Jones). And we constantly "plead the blood" as some sort of mystical formula of protection. But few Christians can explain its great glory and benefits, and seldom enter into its power.

When Christ lifted the cup at the last Passover, he said, "This cup is the new covenant in My blood, which is shed for you" (Luke 22:20). We memorialize his sacrifice every time we have communion. But that is the limit of most Christians' knowledge of Jesus' blood. We know about the blood being shed but not about its being sprinkled!

The first biblical reference to the sprinkling of the blood is in Exodus 12:22: "You shall take a bunch of hyssop, dip it in the blood that is in the basin, and strike the lintel and the two door posts with the blood that is in the basin." As long as the blood was left in the basin, it was of no effect; it had no power against the death angel. It had to be lifted out of the basin and sprinkled on the door to fulfill its purpose of protection.

The blood in Exodus 12 is a type of the blood of Christ that flowed from Calvary. If Christ is Lord of your life, then your door posts -- your heart -- have been sprinkled by his blood. And this sprinkling is not for forgiveness only but also for our protection.

Jesus sprinkles his own blood on us when, by faith, we receive his finished work at Calvary. And until we truly believe in the power of his sacrifice at Calvary, the blood of Jesus cannot produce any effect upon our souls! "Whom God set forth as a propitiation [reconciliation] by His blood, through faith" (Romans 3:25).

Praise God with high praises for the precious blood of Jesus: "We also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement" (Romans 5:11).



The Twin Heads of Legalism

On the one end, legalism desires to earn God's salvation by following the law or good works. On the other end, for those who are truly born again, the temptation is to know that God wants us to be sanctified into the image of His dear Son and to go through that process by trying to live the Christian life by a new kind of law that binds you. Salvation is by faith, and living the Christian life is by faith as well that produces love for the One who has saved you, and in response showing it by good works which is an outflow of the new life within. The life of the Spirit moves His children in the direction of holy living and yearning after God. "For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world" - Titus 2:11-12. While salvation is not a license to sin, grace teaches us that the love of Christ constrains us to follow in His footsteps, loving not the world or the things of this world (1 John 2:15), and His commandments are not grievous (1 John 5:3). Following in His steps because you love Him is the natural response.



If Jesus had preached the same message that ministers preach today, He would never have been crucified.- Leonard Ravenhill

Questioning the Status Quo

Questioning shallow Christianity and instead desiring ignorance to just believe is not a means to create unbelief. It is the means that God has called you to come out from among them and seek the truth of conviction by the Spirit, repentance and faith, and true, deep, and genuine belief. There is too much at stake and souls in loss to promote a shallow Christianity and an intellectual faith, which sends people to a devil's hell in the end. Having a form of godliness but denying the power thereof. The non-experimental, sentimental, emotional, dead orthodoxy of Americanized Christianity.



The 1802 Revival at Yale University from revival-library.org

The 1802 Revival at Yale University was a significant religious awakening that transformed the spiritual climate of the college and had a lasting impact on American religious history. This revival, a pivotal event in the Second Great Awakening, saw a significant portion of the student body embrace evangelical Christianity.

Causes of the 1802 Revival

The 1802 Revival can be attributed to a confluence of factors. Timothy Dwight played a crucial role in laying the groundwork for this spiritual awakening. Dwight, a staunch Calvinist and a gifted orator, challenged the prevailing rationalist philosophy through his sermons and lectures. He engaged students in debates about the authority of the Scriptures, effectively countering the influence of deistic and atheistic ideas. Dwight's efforts to awaken religious interest among the students, coupled with the growing dissatisfaction with the spiritual and moral decline on campus, created a fertile ground for revival.

Furthermore, the 1802 Revival at Yale was part of a broader religious movement known as the Second Great Awakening, which swept through the United States in the late 18th and early 19th centuries. This movement was characterized by fervent religious zeal, emotional preaching, and a renewed emphasis on personal conversion experiences. The revival fires that ignited at Yale were influenced by the religious fervour spreading throughout New England and the nation.

Adding to these factors, the "Concert of Prayer" movement, which emerged in the late 18th century, played a significant role in fostering a climate of prayer and expectation for revival. This movement, which urged Christians to unite in prayer for spiritual awakening, helped to create a sense of anticipation for God's intervention in the religious and moral decline of the nation.

Another contributing factor was the influence of Jonathan Edwards' book, "A Narrative of Surprising Conversions". This book, which recounted the powerful conversion experiences during the First Great Awakening, had a profound impact on religious thought in New England. It helped to shape the understanding of revival and inspired a renewed emphasis on personal religious experience.

A key insight that emerges from these factors is the significant ideological shift that occurred at Yale during this period. The revival marked a turning point from the dominance of rationalism and Enlightenment thinking to a renewed embrace of evangelical Christianity. This shift had profound implications for Yale's identity as a university and its role in American society.

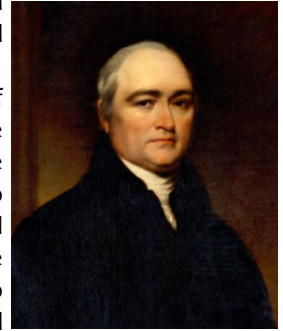
Personal Accounts of the Revival

The personal testimonies of those who participated in or witnessed the 1802 Revival provide valuable insights into the spiritual atmosphere of the time. Lyman Beecher, reflecting on the state of Yale before the revival, described the prevalence of scepticism, immorality, and disregard for religion. He recounted how students openly embraced

the ideas of Enlightenment thinkers and engaged in behaviours that contradicted Christian values.

Timothy Dwight, in his account of the revival, described the dramatic change that swept over the campus. He spoke of the "triumphs of grace" and the "sudden and so great" change in individuals and the overall atmosphere of the college. He noted the sense of wonder and joy among those who had been praying for revival and the awe and amazement of those who were unfamiliar with such spiritual awakenings.

Benjamin Silliman, who experienced a conversion during the revival, described Yale as a "little temple" where prayer and praise became the delight of the majority of students. He observed how even those who remained unconvinced were "awed into respectful silence" by the prevailing religious enthusiasm.



Manifestations of the Holy Spirit

While the 1802 Revival was not characterized by the same emotional excesses and physical manifestations as some other revivals of the Second Great Awakening, there were notable signs of spiritual fervour. Students experienced deep conviction of sin, a profound sense of God's presence, and a newfound joy in their faith. The revival transformed the atmosphere on campus, with prayer and praise becoming commonplace.

Key Takeaways

The power of leadership: Timothy Dwight's leadership was instrumental in creating an environment conducive to revival. His commitment to Christian orthodoxy, his intellectual engagement with students, and his passionate preaching played a crucial role in sparking the revival.

The importance of prayer: The revival was fuelled by fervent prayer. Students gathered in prayer groups, interceding for a spiritual awakening on campus. This highlights the importance of prayer in fostering revival and spiritual growth.

The transformative power of the Gospel: The revival demonstrated the transformative power of the Gospel. Students who had previously embraced scepticism and immorality experienced a radical change in their lives, turning to faith in Christ. For example, Benjamin Silliman, who initially held sceptical views, underwent a profound conversion during the revival and became a key leader in the religious movement on campus.

The lasting impact of revival: The 1802 Revival had a lasting impact on Yale University and American religious history. It shaped the spiritual climate of the college, contributed to the growth of evangelical Christianity, and influenced the course of the Second Great Awakening.

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