

# Revivals of Religion

by Barton W. Stone

---

*Barton W. Stone's sermon emphasizes the profound impact and necessity of revivals in fostering spiritual growth and unity among believers.*

**Scripture:** Psalm 132:9, Jeremiah 20:9, Acts 2:46, Colossians 3:14, 1 Peter 4:8

**Topics:** "Revival Movement", "Holy Spirit"

---

## Description

Barton W. Stone reflects on a great revival in the West 30 years ago, where thousands gathered with solemnity, seeking the way of life and salvation, with many experiencing deliverance and praising God. The preachers, filled with the Holy Spirit, ministered the word of reconciliation with earnestness and love, laboring tirelessly to save souls and establish them in faith. The congregations were united in prayer and praise, with families and friends fervently praying for each other's salvation, exhibiting brotherly kindness and divine graces. Despite opposition from philosophers and formalists, the revival brought about unity, love, and a deep desire for truth through the reading of the Bible.

---

## Transcript

This term I use for want of a better. It fully expresses my understanding of the subject; and so commonly is it used to express the same idea, that it needs no definition. Philologists [164] may object to the propriety of the term; but philology must sometimes yield to general use. While I hear daily of the great revivals in many parts of the East, my mind with a mournful pleasure reverts to the great revival of the West 30 years ago, and which continued for several years, and spread far and wide. To give a full history of it would be impossible. Often I have gazed with inexpressible emotions at the gathering crowds hurrying to the place of worship. All clothed with solemnity--many wetting their paths with tears--and thousands anxious to find the way of life--many sunk under the burden of sin, and little groups around pointing to them the hope of Israel, and uniting their solemn prayers for their salvation. Many praising God aloud for delivering grace, and cheerfully uniting with the church of God. Thousands silently hanging on the lips of the preacher, who in the warm, loving spirit of his Lord, was ministering to them the word of reconciliation. I then saw, and yet acknowledge some imperfection, some eccentricities or aberrations from what I thought right, among the vast multitudes assembled. But I remembered they were but men, and that I could not reasonably expect to find perfection in such multitudes of imperfect beings. The good so far exceeded the evil, the latter almost disappeared. I saw the religion of Jesus more clearly exhibited in the lives of Christians then, than I had ever seen before or since to the same extent. The preachers were revived. I saw them filled with the Holy Spirit of their Lord, addressing the multitudes, not in Icebergh style, nor according to the studied rules

of rhetoric and oratory; but in the language and spirit of heaven. Impressed with the worth of souls--of unconverted souls, exposed to everlasting punishment--feeling their awful responsibility to God; and feeling the force of divine truth, and the power of religion, in their own souls, they spoke with earnestness, as dying men to dying men. They regarded not the censure, nor the hard speeches of opposers--they might be called enthusiasts and represented as mad, and beside themselves.--This did not move them, unless to pity, to tears and prayers for their opposers. Through many difficulties, they labored night and day, privately and publicly, from house to house, from neighborhood to neighborhood, preaching the word of salvation to all, not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; they labored to save souls, and to establish them in the faith and hope of the gospel,--they, feeling the spirit of love, peace and union, endeavored to promote and cultivate these essentials of religion, wherever they could.

I saw the congregations revived. The saints of every name mingling together, and together offering their sacrifices of prayer and praise in the fire of love to their common Father and Redeemer, and together surrounding the table of their Lord. How affecting! to see parents then weeping over their unconverted children, and praying fervently for them--to see brothers and sisters engaged in the same work for their brothers and [165] sisters--neighbor for neighbor--friends for their friends and enemies. All, old and young, even small children engaged in the same work, not only at the place of worship, but at home and abroad. Religion was their great work, and employed and filled up their happy months and years. Out of the abundance of their hearts they spoke often one to another on the subject of religion; controverted notions were not the themes of their conversation, but the soul-cheering doctrine of heaven, and its divine effects, as experienced by themselves and others. Here was unity indeed--not in opinions but in the spirit.

I saw sinners every where, of every age and sex, rich and poor, bond and free, old and young, weeping, praying, and converting to God--I saw enemies become friends, and sweetly united in the bonds of love--I saw brotherly kindness, meekness, gentleness, obedience, all the divine graces, growing and abounding among the saints of God. The Bible was read with intense desire to find the truth. This, this I call a revival. This I call the work of God.

Philosophers, dogmatists, and formalists, who were for measuring religion according to their own rule, were generally opposers of this revival. Their opposition appeared portentous of evil, but past harmlessly over as a threatening, empty cloud. The great obstruction to this revival was the spirit of sectarianism, which like a restless demon, infected and destroyed the glorious work, wherever it came. Never can this spirit, and the spirit of Christ amalgamate. As much opposed as darkness and light--as fire and water, are they.

Shall we oppose revivals because we discover in them much enthusiasm, mismanagement, and unscriptural means employed by those engaged in them? If we do, we may also oppose every good, not perfect, or to which is attached any imperfection. The imperfection should be opposed, but in the meekness and gentleness of Christ; but great care should be taken that while rooting out the tares, we do not root out the wheat.

Shall we oppose a revival, because we think the conductors of it are ignorant of what we may deem the most important doctrine of the gospel? If this be our privilege, it is also the privilege of all; every party will reject of course every revival not their own. If genuine religion be the fruit of such revivals, we dare not reject without incurring the divine displeasure.

I have read in an Eastern paper of the character of the revivals in one section of that country. It states that Christians of all denominations lovingly united in worship, even in the breaking of bread at the Lord's table. In such a work I will rejoice. Yet I have my fears that the demon of partyism will check and destroy it. Yet Christianity will prevail so far as to have enlisted under her banners many, who cannot and will not be drawn into the vortex of sectarianism, and who will remain free, and preach reformation to the sects in bondage.

Some reject revivals because they think we should always be [166] revived. Will such reject religion, because they do not always feel that they love God with all their heart, and their neighbors as themselves? In other words, because they are not perfect. Do they always feel the same divine affections in the same degree? Have they always the same vivid perceptions of truth? Have they always the same fervid engagedness in the cause of God? If not, why object to revivals? The flames of devotion cannot be confined; they will break forth, as in Jeremiah's case; and their efforts are mighty in families, neighborhoods, and congregations, in destroying the kingdom of darkness, and in building up Zion. Oh Lord; "Let thy priests be clothed with salvation; and let thy saints shout for joy." Psalms 132, 9.

---

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/barton-w-stone/revivals-of-religion/>

# *Grow in Your Walk with Christ*

---

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

**[www.sermonindex.net](http://www.sermonindex.net)**