

'What Is Revival?'

by Mark D. Partin

Revival is a God-initiated process of renewal, restoration, and realignment that transforms individuals and communities into more than they ever thought possible.

Scripture: 2 Chronicles 7:14, Psalm 85:6, Ezekiel 36:26, Acts 3:19, Romans 12:2

Topics: "Revival", "Spiritual Renewal"

Description

Mark D. Partin delves into the significance of true, life-changing revivals that are initiated by God, reach beyond their location, and spark other revivals, such as The Great Awakenings, the Welsh Revival, the Asbury Revival, and the Saskatoon Canadian Revival. He challenges listeners to reflect on the need for revival in today's world and emphasizes that revival is when God pours out His presence, bringing conviction, holiness, restoration, and empowerment for fruitful use. Personal revivals lead to corporate revival as individuals deepen their relationship with God, seeking Him diligently and becoming beacons of light in the world.

Transcript

There have been many revivals that have included much preaching, praising and worshipping of God. However, there have only been a few life-changing, God-directed revivals. The difference in these revivals and the others is that: 1) they were initiated by God; 2) they reached much further than the location of the revival itself; 3) and they were a catalyst that sparked other revivals. The most well-known revivals of this kind were: The Great Awakenings in the 1800's; the Welsh Revival in 1904; the Asbury Revival in Wilmore, Kentucky in 1970 and the even the latest one, the Saskatoon Canadian Revival in 1971 that birthed the Canadian Revival Fellowship which continues to impact Canada and other countries in revival. This has to make one ponder about the condition of our world since the 1800's or even since almost 40 years ago in 1971. Are we in need of revival? Do we need more than a gathering of people in a church or under a tent demonstrating a lot of activity, but bearing no fruit? Do we even understand what a revival is?

I fully understand and know what a revival is because I have experienced one. A revival is when Almighty God reigns and pours out His presence. He ministers conviction, holiness, cleansing, restoration, and empowerment to His people so that He can use them fruitfully. It is not evangelism, but souls will be saved. It is not discipleship, but it causes a hunger to be aroused for spiritual growth. Revival is when God blows His breath of life into a person or church and gives a fresh awareness and anointing of His presence and Holy Spirit. A life-changing revival should be a springboard for impacting His Kingdom in mighty ways.

Generally God uses individual personal revivals to spawn a corporate revival. Personal revival is when a person is prompted to go deeper with God. He has a tremendous desire to reflect God's image as intently as possible. He is willing to lay aside all worldly opinions and views, and humble himself before God the Father in complete submission and readiness for obedience. He tenaciously seeks God through the diligent reading of His Word, faithful times of prayer and quiet communion. God, in turn, will also actively pursue an even deeper relationship with this person. He will completely engulf him with His tremendous presence and love. A person of true revival will be so drowned in God's presence, he will become a stranger of the world. His life will serve as a beacon of light drawing people out of the darkness.

While in South Africa in 2007, Dr. Richard Blackaby posed to me this question, "Is revival a renewal or a restoration?" I begin thinking that to renew means to make new or fresh again; to restore with vigor or perfection. Restoration means to put or bring back into existence or use; to put again in the possession of something.

When a person responds to conviction and allows God to minister holiness into his life, he is made into a new being. The sanctification process has been allowed a new start. A person is once again put into a position to be used by God. A person once again possesses the ability to hear from and discern guidance from the Holy Spirit. Therefore my answer to Dr. Blackaby's question is that both renewal and restoration are marked results of a revival that is brought about by God.

However, restoration that means to bring back to a former or original state is inadequate in describing what happens to a person following a revival experience. Once you have felt the hand of God upon your life; once you have felt His breath of life enter your dead soul; once you are a personal witness to His power; your life has gone to a much deeper level than ever before experienced. One's life has not been brought back to a prior condition. It has been elevated to a whole new being in Christ, and that is so much more. I can liken it to the death of Jesus. Jesus was a man of flesh, the same as you and I. He died a torturous death. When God brought Jesus back from the dead, He did not restore Him back to the flesh that was without sin. He was ascended into heaven and what remained was the Holy Spirit. He was so much more! God initiates revival to transform a person into more than they ever were or ever thought they could be.

I believe revival is a process of realignment. When we accepted Christ as our Savior, we submitted our lives to align with His. We began walking hand-in-hand, heart-to-heart with God. We stepped onto His path and made a commitment to walk in His ways. However, when we allow unconfessed sin to seep into the crevices of our life, we begin to stray from the path God set forth. We are no longer in alignment with Him and His purposes. The longer and further we stray, the more out of alignment we become until we can no longer recognize our Father.

As a church we had unintentionally gotten out of alignment with God. People had experienced personal touches from God, but as a church body we had ignored our corporate sin of arrogance and pride. This had taken us away from His path and His purposes. Thankfully God initiated revival and our church body was realigned with Him. It can be said that we experienced a Kingdom Alignment from God.

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