

True Revival and Its Apostolic Ingredients

by Martin Knapp

True revivals are characterized by the presence of the Holy Ghost, meeting the conditions of Pentecostal revivals, and producing fruits such as multitudes saved and sanctified.

Scripture: Matthew 7:20, John 16:8, Acts 2:1-13, 1 Corinthians 12:4, Galatians 5:22

Topics: "Holy Spirit", "True Revival"

Description

Martin Wells Knapp preaches about the characteristics of true revivals, emphasizing the importance of meeting Pentecostal conditions such as prayer, fasting, and obedience to experience a genuine outpouring of the Holy Ghost. He highlights the necessity of possessing the graces and gifts of the Holy Ghost for the highest type of Pentecostal revivals, and the need for fruitful results including salvation, sanctification, and reconciliation. Knapp also discusses the opposition faced by true revivals, the miraculous manifestations often present, and the contagious nature of genuine revival movements that honor the Holy Ghost and produce spiritual growth.

Transcript

The difference between true revivals and the mechanical efforts of Christless clubs to secure members is seen from the following facts: True revivals are conditional revivals. They are cloudbursts of salvation, caused by the Holy Ghost, yet the precipitation is conditioned upon human compliance with certain spiritual laws. Plural as well as individual Pentecosts are promised, and must be proclaimed. Given one hundred and twenty persons as dead to sin and the world, as absorbed in Christ, as loyal to His instructions, as united, prayerful, obedient, earnest and expectant, as was the first Pentecostal Church. It is impossible to have Pentecostal revivals without Pentecostal material. A fire can not be built with sea-soaked wood. World-soaked preachers and churches must be kiln-dried before they are fit for revival kindling wood.

A box on a street corner is a better site for a Pentecostal revival than a fine cathedral full of spiritual mummies. Prayer, fasting, the baptism of the Holy Ghost upon the church, Holy Ghost preaching, testimony and personal work are all conditions of Pentecostal revivals. Sham revivals are those in which these conditions are either aped or ignored, and result in a fizzle instead of a Pentecostal deluge. A refusal to meet Pentecostal conditions on part of preacher or people, or both, has caused the criminal abortion of many a revival. Perpetrators of the crime are guilty of soul-murder. Meeting the conditions precipitates Pentecost. As they are so simple, reasonable and clearly revealed, all churches may embrace

them, and thus share the rich results that follow. At Pentecost the Holy Ghost was honored. He was given the place assigned Him by Christ. The Church welcomed Him, and yielded to His guidance. Through the Word and Fire-baptized workers, people were convicted of "Sin, Righteousness, and coming Judgment." Penitents were regenerated, and believers fully sanctified. "Have you received the Holy Ghost since you believed?" - was the first question asked by Paul at the great Ephesus revival. A genuine revival is impossible without the supremacy of the Holy Ghost among its promoters, as daylight is without the sun. Possession of the graces and gifts of the Holy Ghost are absolutely indispensable to the highest type of Pentecostal revivals. Where He or any of His offices is ignored He is grieved, and the work stopped or greatly marred.

True revivals are fruitful. Multitudes were saved and sanctified through them. Thousands were added to the Church. Sins were exposed and forsaken. Sin was confessed and cleansed away. Wrongs were righted and Christless business abandoned. A revival which stops short of such fruits needs reviving. A revival which does not make men right with God and man, is a cloud without water. One whose climax is church - joining instead of salvation is a death trap. Substitution of card-signing for the altar of prayer is one of the marks of an apostate church and hireling ministry. The time has come for people to discriminate between meetings for stuffing church statistics and those for saving from sin. A revival that a Scriptural sermon on sanctification will spoil is not from the skies. The lightning of Scripture-truth never kills a genuine Scriptural revival, but increases the intensity of its downpour. Pentecostal revivals are characterized by the manifestations and fruits of the Holy Ghost. A reform in reporting revivals is needed. It is customary to report persons joining the church as converts. A diagnosis of an ordinary church membership will find less than one in four giving evidences of conversion. Some say one in ten. Where people simply hold up the hand, or rise for prayers, or unite with the church, instead of passing through the Bible experiences of pricked-to-the-heart conviction, tear-blinding, wrong-righting, sin-forsaking heart-repentance, and assurance-giving, joy-imparting regeneration, the report would be nearer the truth to read, "One hundred dupes deceived," than "One hundred souls converted". A lie in the shape of a deceptive revival may be "ever the blackest of lies."

True revivals are miraculous. Pentecostal revivals originally were frequently attended by healing of the body and other miraculous manifestations. "And the multitudes gave heed with one accord unto the things that were spoken by Philip, when they heard, and saw the signs which he did. For from many of those which had unclean spirits, they came out, crying with a loud voice: and many that were palsied, and that were lame, were healed" (Acts 8:6,7). "And God wrought special miracles by the hands of Paul: in so much that unto the sick were carried away from his body handkerchiefs or aprons, and the diseases departed from them" (Acts 19:11,12). Inspired men possessed this power, and used it for God's glory. The presence of modern fanaticism and skepticism in regard to divine healing, such as characterizes this period, had not then circumscribed its influence for good. The apostles, divinely led, recognized it a helpful auxiliary of the "Holiness Movement" in its incipiency, and doubtless, as the movement regains its Pentecostal purity and power, the exercise of this and other kindred gifts will shine as then.

True revivals are protracted. If the opposition did not yield at once a "long time therefore they tarried there speaking boldly in the Lord, which bare witness unto the word of His grace" (Acts 14:3). Many promising revivals are nipped in the bud because they will not sprout, grow, bud, blossom and ripen in "ten days." A plan which allows an evangelist to adjust his appointments to providential circumstances and leadings seems to have been the apostolic example.

True revivals are opposed. They were mocked, derided, and hindered in every way that Satan and his allies could devise. "But the Jews that were disobedient stirred up the souls of the Gentiles, and made them evil affected against the brethren" (Acts 13:2). There is a radical defect in every revival that neither the world nor hypocrites oppose. Satan will not see his kingdom invaded and souls captured without a struggle. Sham professors are among the first and most bitter soldiers to fight true revivals.

True revivals are contagious. Their promoters were magnetic centers of revival power. Full of God and His gifts they stormed the citadels of sin wherever their conquering Captain led. The fortifications of sins and superstitions and carnality which defied them, were shattered by the dynamite of divine power. The works of the devil were burned up under the blazing fire of revival truth. Sparks flew from one place to another until the Pentecostal fires spread over the known world, and have been spreading down all the centuries notwithstanding the floods of water with which the devil and his aids have sought to extinguish them.

Genuine revivals are beautiful trees, laden with choice, ripe fruit; sham revivals are trees with dead leaves, and full of painted, sham fruit tied to the branches. Genuine revivals alarm the wicked and convince them of their condition; spurious revivals amuse them, or give false comfort, or disgust them. Genuine revivals produce healthy spiritual children; spurious revivals leave the churches barren or crowd them with illegitimate children.

Genuine revivals honor the Holy Ghost and all of His offices. Spurious revivals ignore Him and spurn His fruits. Genuine revivals welcome the sobs of the penitent, shouts of the saved and demonstrations of the fully sanctified; spurious revivals are strangers to all such manifestations. Genuine revivals may utilize the altar, the inquiry-room, rising for prayers and every other available expedient to awaken and lead into salvation, but it rests in none of these things, and is satisfied with nothing less than clear experiences; spurious revivals rest in the use of means, and leave their victims on the quicksands of a dry profession. As the fog and mist of ecclesiastical darkness clears away, and believers regain primitive Pentecostal simplicity and power, true revivals will doubtless rise to climaxes of power now unknown.

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