



World Christian Fellowship

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Revival

Two biggest problems among some professing Christians:

1. Reading the Word of God
2. Prayer

They think that it's a service to God.

This is the biggest lie and deception from Satan.

Definition:

Zondervan's *New International Dictionary of the Christian Church* describes it as: "A spontaneous spiritual awakening by the Holy Spirit among professing Christians in the churches, which results in deepened religious experience, holy living, evangelism and missions, the founding of educational and philanthropic institutions, and social reform."

IVP's *Dictionary of Christianity in America* puts it: "Revivalism is the movement that promotes periodic spiritual intensity in church life, during which the unconverted come to Christ, and the converted are shaken out of their spiritual lethargy."

We may never find a perfect definition of revival, so perhaps it would be more beneficial to focus on some of the major characteristics that have been most prominent in revivals throughout history. Here are five important characteristics:

1. Saints are revived. Revival often begins with believers, transforming once lethargic laypeople into zealous servants of God.
2. Sinners are saved. During revival, classic sinners, such as prostitutes and drunks, join society's beautiful people at the altar to confess their evil ways and seek God's forgiveness.
3. Revival sermons shy away from complex theology to focus the basic Gospel message of sin and salvation in all its staggering simplicity, often with horrific descriptive pictures of the sufferings of hell.
4. Society is influenced. Born-again believers have founded schools, universities, and Bible colleges; fought evils like slavery and child labor; and campaigned to elect godly leaders to office, showing that, while revival may begin as an individual awakening, it ultimately has an impact on the culture beyond the doors of the church.
5. Missions and evangelism flourish. Revival transformed William Booth, who went on to found the Salvation Army, now one of the world's largest Christian organizations. Likewise, revival sparked many of the world's biggest and best-known missionary groups, evangelism efforts, parachurch organizations, and Christian denominations.

Meaning:

The word "revive" wears its meaning upon its forehead; it is from the Latin, and may be interpreted thus—to live again, to receive again a life which has almost expired; to rekindle into a flame the vital spark which was nearly extinguished.

Two scenarios will show the true meaning.

1. A person who drowns in the pool taken out and found still life is there but not full consciousness. Then you do the necessary treatment the person comes alive, this is revival.
2. A person who gets fits and becomes unconscious and then someone does the treatment then the person comes alive to the potential is called revival.

Revival can only be applied to a living soul, or to that which once lived.

To be revived is a blessing which can only be enjoyed by those who have some degree of life. Those who have no spiritual life are not, and cannot be, the subjects of a revival.

Many blessings may come to the unconverted in consequence of a revival among Christians, but the revival itself has to do only with those who already possess spiritual life.

There must be vitality in some degree before there can be a quickening of vitality, or, in other words, a revival.

Psalm 85:6, *“Will you not revive us again, that your people may rejoice in you?”*

Habakkuk 3:2, *O Lord, I have heard Your speech and was afraid; O Lord, revive Your work in the midst of the years! In the midst of the years make it known; In wrath remember mercy.*

Psalm 80:18, *Then we will not turn back from You; Revive us, and we will call upon Your name.*

Isaiah 57:15, *For thus says the High and Lofty One Who inhabits eternity, whose name is Holy: “I dwell in the high and holy place, With him who has a contrite and humble spirit, To revive the spirit of the humble, And to revive the heart of the contrite ones.*

When you read the history of Israel and it is just up-and-down. One king is wicked, and God withholds his blessing or sends judgment.

Another king recovers godliness and there is a reviving and an awakening of true worship for a season.

When you turn to the New Testament, even though the period of time is really short between Jesus’s resurrection and the

close of the New Testament, we do get glimpses already of churches that were in need of reviving.

I think the book of Hebrews was written to a church like that.

Hebrews 5:12, *For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you again the first principles of the oracles of God; and you have come to need milk and not solid food.*

Hebrews 12:12-13, *Therefore strengthen the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees, ¹³ and make straight paths for your feet, so that what is lame may not be dislocated, but rather be healed.*

So, this is a church that is already drooping. It is already dragging. It has gotten tired already and needs reviving.

In the history of the church, the term revival in its most biblical sense has meant a sovereign work of God in which the whole region of many churches,

- ✓ Christians has been lifted out of spiritual indifference,
- ✓ worldliness into conviction of sin,
- ✓ earnest desires for more of Christ and His word,
- ✓ boldness in witness,
- ✓ purity of life,
- ✓ lots of conversions,
- ✓ joyful worship, and

✓ renewed commitment to missions.

You feel God has moved here. God doing among many Christians at the same time or in the same region.

This type of reviving involves the renewing of the mind, or a bringing back of one's state.

Revival among Christianity is a meeting, or gathering, which involves the quickening, or an awakening, of the conscience (or mind) to God's word.

With this definition above the qualities of true revival can be observed.

1. True revival involves proper preaching of Word of God

This quality can be found in the book of **Nehemiah 9:1-38**. Where Ezra, a scribe who was highly trained in the Law of Moses, stood at a wooden podium that was made for this purpose.

Nehemiah 8:1-5, *Now all the people gathered together as one man in the open square that was in front of the Water Gate; and they told Ezra the scribe to bring the Book of the Law of Moses, which the Lord had commanded Israel.² So Ezra the priest brought the Law before the assembly of men and women and*

all who could hear with understanding on the first day of the seventh month.³ Then he read from it in the open square that was in front of the Water Gate from morning until midday, before the men and women and those who could understand; and the ears of all the people were attentive to the Book of the Law.⁴ So Ezra the scribe stood on a platform of wood which they had made for the purpose; and beside him, at his right hand, stood Mattithiah, Shema, Anaiah, Urijah, Hilkiyah, and Maaseiah; and at his left hand Pedaiyah, Mishael, Malchijah, Hashum, Hashbadana, Zechariah, and Meshullam.⁵ And Ezra opened the book in the sight of all the people, for he was standing above all the people; and when he opened it, all the people stood up.

It was at the wooden podium where Ezra spoke the Law to all of Israel, while they sat attentively listening to Ezra.

Nehemiah 8:7, *Also Jeshua, Bani, Sherebiah, Jamin, Akkub, Shabbethai, Hodijah, Maaseiah, Kelita, Azariah, Jozabad, Hanan, Pelaiah, and the Levites, helped the people to understand the Law; and the people stood in their place.*

Peter, on the day of Pentecost, gave the first sermon to the Jewish people pointing from the Old Testament that Jesus was Messiah sent by God, to be crucified. **Acts 2:14-36**,

A true revival has with its true preaching from God's word in context.

2. True revival involves proper explanation of Word of God

Ezra read the Law of Moses before Israel, the elders explained, what Ezra read so those who listened understood what was being read to them.

Nehemiah 8:8, *So they read distinctly from the book, in the Law of God; and they gave the sense, and helped them to understand the reading.*

True revival involves a proper explanation of God's word, so there is proper understanding of what is being proclaimed.

Jesus told the disciples concerning the Great Commission. They were to go out into all the world and make disciples of all nations. The disciples were also to baptize in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, and teach all that Jesus commanded them.

Matthew 28:18-20, *And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. ¹⁹Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age." Amen.*

In the same manner, the disciples of the early church continually “devoted themselves to the apostle’s teaching”

Acts 2:42, *And they continued steadfastly in the apostles’ doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers.*

True revival is not just a proclamation of the truth, but also a proper explanation of the truth that is proclaimed, so all understand, and are edified.

3. Conviction, Confession of sin, and Repentance

Nehemiah 9:1-37, the entire nation of Israel, after the Law was read, and explained properly to them, confessed their sin before the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

Nehemiah 9:2, *Then those of Israelite lineage separated themselves from all foreigners; and they stood and confessed their sins and the iniquities of their fathers.*

They had seen in the historical account of their Israelite history the grace and the long-suffering of God, and their rebellion against Him.

Nehemiah 9:38, *“And because of all this, We make a sure covenant and write it; Our leaders, our Levites, and our priests seal it.”*

In the New Testament, there are also several verses that highlight this truth. Jesus explained to His disciples it is not what goes into the body that makes mankind unclean, but what comes out of mankind’s corrupt heart that makes mankind unclean.

Matthew 15:15-20,

Peter, when proclaiming to the Jews that Christ was crucified at their hands they were “pierced to the heart,” showing contrition by what they heard.

Acts 2:37, *Now when they heard this, they were cut to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, “Men and brethren, what shall we do?”*

Paul reminded the churches in Ephesus that all men were born “dead in trespasses and sins,” and were by nature children of wrath like all of mankind.

Ephesians 2:1-3, *And you He made alive, who were dead in trespasses and sins,² in which you once walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now works in the sons of*

disobedience,³ among whom also we all once conducted ourselves in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, just as the others.

In this dispensation there is the active work of the Holy Spirit, in conjunction with God's word that convicts, and illumines, one's conscience of their sin and unbelief.

John 16:7-8, *Nevertheless I tell you the truth. It is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you; but if I depart, I will send Him to you.⁸ And when He has come, He will convict the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment:*

True revival has the characteristics of conviction, confession of sin, and repentance.

3. Qualitative NOT Quantitative

There were whole groups of people whom recognized the holiness of God and repented of their sins. The entire nation of Israel was called to repentance by Ezra, who read the Law to them.

Nehemiah 8:8, *So they read distinctly from the book, in the Law of God; and they gave the sense, and helped them to understand the reading.*

At the start of the church, the Lord daily added to the number of those who being saved from their sins, and the wrath of God, by repentance.

Acts 2:47, *praising God and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily those who were being saved.*

However, there were also examples of individuals who had also been revived in their conscience concerning the merciful works of God.

One example is the Ethiopian eunuch, who Philip instructed while the Ethiopian was reading a portion of the Old Testament, which pointed to Christ.

Acts 8:25-33,

The Ethiopian eunuch received Christ Jesus, and shortly thereafter was baptized.

Acts 8:34-39,

Another similar instance was during Paul's preaching in Thyratira. The Lord opened up the heart of a woman named Lydia, who understood the message of what Paul was teaching, and believed in Christ Jesus.

Acts 16:14-15, *Now a certain woman named Lydia heard us. She was a seller of purple from the city of Thyatira,*

who worshiped God. The Lord opened her heart to heed the things spoken by Paul. ¹⁵ And when she and her household were baptized, she begged us, saying, "If you have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come to my house and stay." So she persuaded us.

True revival is not just relegated to a large group of people, but also can happen to one person.

4. True revival is progressive, not just static:

True revival is not only an event, or experience that takes place at a certain time in a certain arena, tent, conference centre, or stadium. True revival continues throughout a person's life, because their mind is being constantly transformed by the Holy Spirit, through the word of God, according to God's grace and mercy.

Romans 12:1-2, *I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service. ² And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.*

Christians are commanded by Jesus to abide in Him constantly, so they may bear much fruit.

John 15:4-9,

Christians are commanded to consistently be filled with the Holy Spirit.

Ephesians 5:18, *And do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissipation; but be filled with the Spirit,*

Commanded to walk by the Spirit, which results in a believer exhibiting the fruit of the Holy Spirit.

Galatians 5:16-26,

A believer is to have the word of Christ dwell in them richly.

Colossians 3:16, *Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.*

To meet with saints often to encourage and be encouraged.

Hebrews 10:24-25, *And let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works,²⁵ not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching.*

Revival is not just a one-time event at a specific location, nor is revival a mystical experience that brings a believer “close” to God, but it occurs regularly in a person’s life who has received the forgiveness of sins in Christ Jesus, and is dedicated to studying God’s word.

When it comes to the word revival, we as believers who hold to a Biblical worldview must be cautious how we use and define this word.

A true revival, according to Scripture, has proper preaching, proper explanation of God's word, the confession of sins, and repentance to the gospel.

A revival can occur in the consciences of a group of people, or in the conscience of one person.

Finally,

- a true revival is not just a one-time event, or
- an exclusively emotional experience, or
- even a return to the "sign" gifts of the early church,
- but it is a progressive practice of the Christian life,
- as one meditates constantly on God's word, and
- is filled with the Holy Spirit.

Conclusion:

What would revival in the church?

What would a real reformation in the church?

What would change?

The church would get very serious about

- ✓ Holiness and
- ✓ Confronting sin.

That's the reformation our Lord calls for.

The reformation would include

- ✓ New love for Christ,
- ✓ Exclusion of compromise,
- ✓ Very serious plea for Holiness and
- ✓ Confrontation of sin.

You hear people say and pray that it would be great if the Lord would bring a revival, do a great and mighty work.

It needs to start in the church. If the church is going to have a then it needs to have to refresh its first love for Christ, stop the compromises with the world, and to need to confront sin.