

## Studies on Revival

## Introduction to Revivals

## I. Why study Revival?

- To strengthen our desire to know God more deeply and to experience the fulness of God's power in their lives – Philippians 3:10
- To study the power of God displayed practically through Revivals.
- To encourage us to press on in Christ's service
- To distinguish true revival from its counterfeits
- To promote revival through its Scriptural, practical, and spiritual means

## II. What is a Revival?

- The term implies that something once alive is enlivened once again
- “An evangelical revival is an extraordinary work of God in which Christians repent of their sins as they become intensely aware of his presence in their midst, and they manifest a positive response to God in renewed obedience to the known will of God, resulting in both a deepening of their individual and corporate experience with God, and an increased concern to win others to Christ.” – from *The Ten Greatest Revivals Ever* by Elmer Towns and Douglas Porter, p.10
- “It presupposes that the church is sunk down in a backslidden state, and a revival consists in the return of the Church from her backslidings and the conversion of sinners.” – Charles Finney, *Revivals of Religion*

## III. Are there examples of Revivals in the Scriptures?

- National revivals in the Old Testament
  - Israel, through Samuel – I Samuel 7
  - Judah under Asa – II Chronicles 14-15
  - Judah under Jehoshaphat – II Chronicles 19-20
  - Judah under Hezekiah – II Chronicles 29-32, Isaiah 35-39
  - Judah under Josiah – II Chronicles 34-35
  - Israel, through Ezra and Nehemiah – Nehemiah 8
- Examples of Revival are more difficult to find in the New Testament
  - Possible examples include John the Baptist, Christ's ministry, and Pentecost
  - However, the Gospel is presented as something new and not as a rekindling of the Jewish religion
    1. NOTE – I am using the position that revival is re-creating action as opposed to a creative action. For example, Pentecost is less a reviving of the church and instead is an empowering at the beginning of the church's mission.

- Examples of Christians and churches needing revival, and that revival being possible, can be seen in the Seven Churches of Revelation:
  1. Ephesus – left first love – Revelation 2:4-5
  2. Smyrna – persecution – Revelation 2:10
  3. Pergamum – false doctrine – Revelation 2:14-15
  4. Thyatira – immorality – Revelation 2:20-22
  5. Sardis – no life – Revelation 3:1-2
  6. Philadelphia – the only one that seems on track
  7. Laodicea – complacency – Revelation 3:15-16

“As long as we are content to live without revival, we will.” – Leonard Ravenhill

“I have a theory...that there is not a church, chapel, or mission on earth where you cannot have revival, provided there is a little nucleus of faithful people who will hold onto God until He comes down. First, let a few Christians—there need not be many—get thoroughly right with God themselves. This is the prime essential. If this is not done, the rest, I’m sorry to say, cannot be done, and it will come to nothing. Second, let them bind themselves together to pray for revival until God opens the heavens and comes down. Third, let them put themselves at the disposal of God to use them as He sees fit in winning others to Christ. That’s all. This is sure to bring revival in any church or community. I have given this prescription around the world. It has been taken by many churches and many communities, and in no instance has it ever failed, and it cannot fail.” – R.A. Torrey