

Revivals And Church History :: Are We Ready For Revival? by James Burns

Are We Ready For Revival? by James Burns - posted by sermonindex (), on: 2009/2/8 20:15

Are We Ready For Revival?

by James Burns

In a revival of religion, a new breath will pass over the valley of dry bones and make them live. And with that coming of life, a prophet, whose word shall be like fire, and like a hammer that breaketh the rock in pieces. For this revival the Church herself may not be ready, but the world is ready.

For to the Church a revival means humiliation, a bitter knowledge of unworthiness, and an open and humiliating confession of sin on the part of her ministers and people. It is not the easy and glowing thing many think it to be, who imagine that it fills the empty pews, and reinstates the Church in power and authority. It comes to scorch before it heals. It comes to condemn ministers and people for their unfaithful witness, for their selfish living, for their neglect of the cross, and to call all them to daily renunciation, to an evangelical poverty, and to a deep and daily consecration.

This is why a revival has ever been unpopular with large numbers within the Church—because it says nothing to them of power such as they have learned to love, or of ease, or of success. It accuses them of sin, it tells them that they are dead, it calls them to awake, to renounce the world, and to follow Christ.

Is the Church today ready to hear that voice? Is she bowed down before God in prostration of need? In conscious dejection of unworthiness? In passionate self-abasement and desire for that renewal which comes through renunciation? It may well be doubted. It is upon the hearts of the few that the agony falls.

Revivals are not usually preceded by the awakening of the Church to a sense of need, but by the awakening of devout souls here and there, who, feeling the need, begin to entreat God in prayer for a revival. Gradually this deepens and spreads until the sense of need becomes a burden, until the cry, "How long, O God! How long!" becomes an agony. This is the cry which God cannot deny. It is for that cry that we must intently listen. For until the need becomes fervent—the answer is not given. Not until the Kingdom of Heaven suffereth violence comes there the divine response (Matt. 11:12).

How then can we hasten this? No revival, we know, can come from below. All attempts to "get up" a revival fail. Nor can we bring a revival down, since prayer is not so much the cause of a revival as the human preparation for one. Must we remain inert, therefore, waiting patiently until it is the will of God to revive His Church? Surely not! Prayer illumines us to a sense of our own and the world's needs. By prayer we can prepare the soil, and so hasten the advent of the new day of grace.

"The surest sign of the approach of a season of revival," says Canon Hay Aitken, "is the disposition to pray for it, which, while it is itself the product of the divine influence, may be regarded as the human response to God's call, which is the condition of the further extension of that spiritual influence."

Is there, then, today a disposition to pray for a revival? Are devout men everywhere becoming alarmed, not for the success of the Church, but for the glory of Christ, lest it be lost altogether? Is there a sense of a burden lying upon men's hearts which will not give them rest, but which makes them agonize in prayer? If not, then the night is not far spent, a deeper darkness still awaits us. For what use would a revival be if we are not prepared for it? It would pass over us without doing its work.

Happily, however, there are signs that this burden is being laid upon the souls of men. Some are beginning passionately to long for better things and to agonize in prayer. And if we would seek to hasten the coming of that great day of the Lord, then we must seek with that "shameless importunity," which Christ commended, until the burden is laid upon us. To fail in this is to be a traitor to Christ, and to the deepest need to the world around us. To this we are called by every impulse we call Christian.

Re: Are We Ready For Revival? by James Burns - posted by run2win, on: 2009/3/4 23:17

Dear Brother Greg,

Thank you for sharing this article; it is a good reminder of what must precede a revival, starting with true brokenness over sin. I don't have words...just a deep longing for the wind of His breath...

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Re: Ready for revival - posted by farshort (), on: 2009/3/13 17:24

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This is exactly what is needed for true revival. It is what is needed for revival in my own life. I should be humiliated for the sin I have allowed into my life, the sexual sin, the addiction of alcohol and drugs, the fear of man, the lack of fear of God, please, pray for me that I and my family may not miss out on the grace of God, without which we will be damned. Brothers and Sisters, please pray for me, that I may not lead my family into damnation. I have put these pleas in here before with no replies. I ask for the mercy of the body of Christ, for their prayers. I am confident that some will reply.

Re: - posted by run2win, on: 2009/5/1 15:15

I have seen your plea for prayer. I am praying for you. I have sent you a pm to encourage you further in the Lord. Do not lose heart.

Re: , on: 2009/5/1 16:01

"I have seen your plea for prayer. I am praying for you."

I am joining with run2win in praying for you... (Thank you, run2win, for bumping this!!)

Brother, our heavenly Father in Heaven has heard your heart's cry... even before you logged in to post... Our wonderful Saviour in Christ Jesus has been praying on your behalf!

Your plea has not gone unheard!

I will keep you in my prayers

Joy

A Plea to God - posted by roadsign (), on: 2009/5/1 16:46

Quote:
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Oh, yes, Lord, awaken us from our stupor! Sensitize us with a holy disturbance over the sins of our society— and over the unchecked injustices. Lord, put to shame all who mock you and your Word.

Protect your righteous ones from the shame inflicted on them by the unrighteous. Vindicate the honour of your humble servants. May your holiness shine freely through them. May they be your willing instruments of spiritual awakening - through prayer and deep surrender.

Diane