

Revivals And Church History :: Repentance and Revival in the Last Days

Repentance and Revival in the Last Days - posted by AbideinHim (), on: 2018/4/12 20:41

Repentance And Revival In The Last Days

By Rich Carmicheal

In the context of the timing and the signs of His Return and the end of the age, Jesus warns us that there will be an increase in deception, wars and rumors of wars, national unrest, famines and earthquakes, persecution and lawlessness, and that most people's love will grow cold (Matt. 24:3-12). He uses the analogy of birth pains (v. 8) which may well indicate that the signs, like birth pains, will increase both in frequency and intensity. He admonishes us that "when these things begin to happen, look up and lift up your heads, because your redemption draws near" (Luke 21:28).

As we consider Jesus' teaching, it seems that all around us are indications that "the end of all things is at hand" (1 Pet. 4:7). We are living in an hour marked by moral deterioration, national conflicts, natural disasters, economic woes and increasing uncertainty and fear. Conditions in our world are becoming more troubled, and pressures on nations and individuals are rising. If ever there was a time for God's people to be alert, sober and busy about His business, it seems it is now.

Unfortunately, some Christians believe they are unable to make any significant impact in the world before Jesus comes back. They reason that conditions in the world and church will continue to worsen and, therefore, there is no hope for widespread salvation and revival. In some cases, they seem more eager for the world to end than they are to redeem whatever time remains in these evil days (Eph. 5:16).

Is such reasoning sound? Is this the time to "throw in the towel" and be content to lie low until Jesus comes back? Should we resign ourselves to inevitable spiritual and moral breakdown, or is there yet hope for a great move of God among the lost and within the church? Can many lost souls yet turn to Jesus Christ for salvation? Can many lukewarm believers yet repent of apathy and worldliness, and become passionate in their love for Christ? Is there still hope for an outbreak of personal and corporate revival?

Judgment or Revival?

The story of Jonah sheds some light on such questions. Because of the wickedness of the people of Nineveh, the Lord sent the Prophet Jonah to the city with a message of impending doom: "Yet forty days and Nineveh shall be overthrown" (3:4). There is no doubt that the Lord's word through Jonah was true. Judgment was inevitable. And yet, because the people believed God and responded to His warning with great humility, prayer and repentance (3:5-9), "God relented from the disaster that He had said He would bring upon them, and He did not do it" (3:10).

God's heart is not to condemn and destroy the wicked, but to lead them to repentance and salvation. Even though the Ninevites deserved judgment, and were about to receive it, God did not want to judge and destroy them. His purpose in sending Jonah was not just to announce the impending doom, but to give the people the opportunity to respond to the warning and escape judgment. Because of His great compassion, His desire all along was for repentance, not destruction.

The Lord cares deeply for all that He has made, especially mankind which He created in His own image and likeness (Gen. 1:26). He is a Savior "who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth" (1 Tim. 2:4). He takes no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but calls sinners to repentance and life. He is rich in kindness, forbearance and patience, and His kindness leads sinners to repentance (Rom. 2:4). Repentance brings great joy in heaven (Luke 15:7, 10), and the Apostle Peter indicates that the Second Coming of Christ may even be delayed (or seem delayed) to allow time for repentance: "With the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance" (2 Pet. 3:8-9).

This Is the Time for Ministry!

So as we consider the signs of the times and the breakdown all around us, how much time do we have? Or a better question might be, "How much time do we need?" Nineveh only had forty days until judgment. And yet, it was enough time for a profound repentance that spared the lives of the many thousands of people living in that city. All that it took was a prophet of God to faithfully, even if reluctantly, proclaim the message of God.

Just as the Lord worked powerfully through Jonah's ministry at such a late hour for Nineveh, so can He work powerfully through us in this late hour for the world. Consider the Apostle Peter's exhortation and

encouragement: "The end of all things is at hand; therefore be serious and watchful in your prayers. And above all things have fervent love for one another. As each one has received a gift, minister it to one another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God. If anyone speaks, let him speak, as the oracles of God. If anyone ministers, let him do it as with the ability which God supplies, that in all things God may be glorified through Jesus Christ" (1 Pet. 4:7-11).

Notice the connection Peter makes between the reality of the nearness of the end of all things and the significance of our ministry to others. "The end of all things is at hand; therefore..." In other words, since the end of the world is so close, it is all the more important that we be serious-minded, sober in spirit, focused in prayer, fervent in love, faithful in ministering God's grace, and passionate in proclaiming His Word. The fact that the end is near should not lessen our ministry, but intensify it! This is not a time to hide, give up or coast until Jesus comes, but it is a time to be wholeheartedly devoted to the work of the Lord. Our lost and hurting world needs us as much as ever. This is the time for the gospel of the kingdom be preached in all the world as a witness to all the nations (Matt. 24:14). This is the time to prove ourselves to be children of God above reproach in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, and to appear as lights in the world as we hold forth the Word of life (Phil. 2:15-16). "See then that you walk circumspectly, not as fools but as wise, redeeming the time, because the days are evil" (Eph. 5:15-16).

Unlimited Potential

In the remaining time before the end of all things, what could yet happen if God's people got serious about holiness, serious about praying earnestly for others, serious about showing God's love to others, serious about sharing God's grace and Word with others, and serious about seeking God's strength and anointing for ministry? What could the Lord yet do through our lives, our prayers and our service? What impact could there be in the days ahead in our families, among our friends, in our neighborhoods, and even in our nation and beyond?

Of course, the potential is unlimited because of the power of God and His Word. He turned the wicked city of Nineveh upside down with the preaching of one man. And He has it on His heart to yet save and revive many precious souls before the Day of Judgment. And even now He is seeking faithful preachers, faithful intercessors, and faithful servants to prepare the way for salvation and revival.

We Hope to Hear from You Soon!

We invite you to contact us through a local office (see page 10) or at:
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Re: Repentance and Revival in the Last Days - posted by InTheLight (), on: 2018/4/12 20:46

Excellent article, many more like it in this month's Herald, here's a link

<http://www.heraldofhiscoming.com/currentissue.htm>

In Christ,