



## Revivals And Church History :: Disturbing Barna Results

### Disturbing Barna Results - posted by roadsign (), on: 2005/9/27 8:32

In this forum many of us have expressed our concern over the lukewarm conditions of our modern day church – our failure to put Christ first in our lives, and our failure to minister effectively into the lives of the broken and wounded and the unsaved. The massive problem of relational tensions and dysfunction in the body is crippling the church. Yet, our concerns don't seem to be shared by a large segment of our fellow worshippers.

Here are a few quotes related to issues of interpersonal relationships, from the Sept. 27,05 article released on the Barna Update site. For the full article and other disturbing issues see:

(<http://www.barna.org/FlexPage.aspx?PageBarnaUpdateNarrow&BarnaUpdateID200>) Barna Update

Quote:

-----Americans rated themselves most positively in the area of "maintaining healthy relationships." Close to half of all self-identified Christian adults (48%) said they are "completely" or "highly" developed in that aspect, with 46% saying they are "about average" in this dimension, and just 6% claimed to be below average.

The second-most favorable rating was for serving other people. About four out of every ten self-described Christian adults (41%) said they are "completely" or "highly" developed in that aspect of their spiritual life, while half said they are about average in this area, and 8% said they are below average.

Next came "consistently living out your faith principles," for which 37% said they do an above average job, 55% claimed to be average, and only 8% admitted to being below average.

There were some noteworthy response patterns and surprising outcomes from the survey.

A majority of adults consider themselves to be "average" in most of the seven areas of spiritual life that were studied.

The survey showed that people are more likely to ignore their areas of spiritual under-development in favor of continuing to focus on the areas in which they are most comfortable or feel most self-confident.

George Barna ... explained. "Americans are generally satisfied with being 'average' in their spiritual maturity. That betrays the fact that we do not serve an 'average' God, or one who is honored by people who are lukewarm about their faith."

Until we are shaken free from this massive denial, the wounded sinners will continue to be damaged by the hypocritical church. Our witness in our society will continue to portray a distorted perception of God, just as was in Paul's day, which was why he said to the Church leaders, "God's name is blasphemed among the Gentiles because of you." Rom. 2:24

I ask, what will it take to break Christendom out of this denial? Think about it for a minute - it will take just what it took in our own personal lives – complete brokenness, and devastation of all that we once held dear – all that served to keep us in denial, including our comfortable religious experience.

I have to admit, that my prayers for revival are submitted with fear and trembling. I ask myself, do I really want to see people's lives be shaken? Do I really want to see the upheaval that it takes to break people out of their delusions? Praying for revival is a costly prayer, because it means that our own lives will be shaken along with the rest. For we are part of the bigger community – and part of the relational dysfunctions.

Nevertheless, we must be disturbed sufficiently with the above statistics, and see the horrendous devastation down the road if God does not intervene.

May God do whatever it takes to break us out of our comfortable denials.

Diane

**Re: Disturbing Barna Results - posted by PreachParsly (), on: 2005/9/27 9:01**

average (adj.)

Of, relating to, or constituting an average.

Being intermediate between extremes, as on a scale.

Quote:

-----A majority of adults consider themselves to be "average" in most of the seven areas of spiritual life that were studied.

Rev 3:16 So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth.

Sadly most are average.

**Re: hummm - posted by dohzman (), on: 2005/9/27 14:11**

What is revival? The short answer is basically the manifestation of the literal presence of God and heaven and all its glory on earth or in a given area. A point in time where Heaven is closer to earth than at any other time.

While revival can be understood as starting in a local church building and spreading out from there, that type of manifestation seems to be somewhat of an act of God's sovereign election. There is a revival that each individual can have where they can overflow with the very presence of Christ. That's the kind of revival that should be sought, that kind of revival will cost the individual everything but is likely to overflow into the other.

I don't believe we need things to go very bad as to outward circumstances in order to see people shaken out of their comfort and sleep. It only takes one sincere heart, breaking up its fallow ground, devoid of self, set on seeking God for a sustained personal revival out of just simply wanting to draw closer with love as its prime motive, and nothing in the known universe will stop all of heaven from that individual coming into the very presence of a Living Saviour, Jesus Christ. Revival!

**Re: - posted by roadsign (), on: 2005/9/27 20:42**

Quote:  
-----I don't believe we need things to go very bad as to outward circumstances in order to see people shaken out of their comfort and sleep.  
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So true. Really, they only need to become dissatisfied with the status quo, including their own spiritual condition. I suspect that it usually takes some sort of circumstances to trigger that awareness. (come out of denial)

Re: "bad things as to outward circumstances": Really, what is very very bad to one, may not be such a big deal to another. It all depends on one's perception of their troubles, how much they depend on the thing that they are losing - whether a job, status, acceptance, relationship, securities, etc etc.

When God works within us, he often seems to take away our most cherished dependencies (maybe even good things which have become our idols), and to us that loss may be "a very bad outward circumstance" that causes us to suffer and feel anger, anxiety or fear; that is - until we surrender fully to God and find our rest in him. I see that as the process of revival.

Those in the Bible who resisted God experienced terror during times of his refining fires of judgment.

According to the Barna statistics, I think that we could conclude that there is still a lot of resistance to the Spirit of God - and unless people willingly submit to God, many may experience the terror of his purifying fires in coming days.

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**Re: - posted by dohzman (), on: 2005/9/28 4:33**

The statement I made that you noted, let me explain. The Lord made a sovereign visitation on our ministry to the streets for a short period of time. Without us preaching people (prostitutes, pimps, pushers) were falling under a great deal of conviction and they were coming in during the afternoon hours and asking for help. Many of them willing went to Teen Challenge and 2 are presently ministering with Wilkerson's ministry. I can't explain it other than to say, you could feel the presence of God and it made you want to be very careful, even in what you thought! This manifestation lasted for almost 4 months. During that time most of the drug traffic stopped in the worst part of town, the bars closed ect...The childrens ministry we ran had people from churches coming to see what exactly was going on, they came from several different states. It was one of those things that is hard to explain, but you knew that God was very close. The local churches had people coming to just watch and then they would go back to thier home churches fired up.

When God can be , "felt" , or so it seemed. There was an intense desire to be holy and to please Him, and the carefulness in all of our daily duties was amazing. Anyway, I see chastisements as instruments God uses to build character. But His Presence is what He uses to effect revival. I guess I see them as 2 different things. I don't know if that helps clarify what it is I was trying to get across? Well that's my feeble attempt anyway. God Bless, Bro. Daryl

**Re: - posted by roadsign (), on: 2005/9/28 7:21**

Quote:

-----The Lord made a sovereign visitation on our ministry to the streets for a short period of time  
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When the light shines in the darkness we are silenced and can only gaze in awe. This is very very encouraging news that didn't seem to get picked up by the statistics radar. Is there futher documentation somewhere on the web about this divine visitation?

Diane

**Re: - posted by dohzman (), on: 2005/9/28 12:03**

We'er from a small city in Canton Ohio and were a part of a Para- Ministry to the poor section (projects) in that area. We started as a childrens ministry and did weekend (fri-sat. --mainly) street preaching and witnessing. We had done it for years when heaven visited us for a short time. I've never checked to see what kind of documentation there was or is out there. I do know that during that time there was some TV interviews done and a general recognition as to the effectiveness of the ministry at that time. I personally avoided as much contact as possible with the media, as did the other pastors. It was during that time that myself and the street team had contracts on our heads because The Lord was saving all the runners (children used for transporting drugs) and prostitutes. There was a report on that because the county multitask head dude along with the mayor at that time came down to give us the heads up and ask us to stay off the streets for a short time. (btw--- we kept going, just called that little church to an over nite prayer meeting). Anyway, as it was gaining much force, the Lord had a Brother stand up and give us a prophetic warning which wasn't taken seriously by the senior pastor and as fast as the divine visitation came, it left. The ministry pretty much disbanded and the void it caused was like a vacuum effect. Over the years I've observed alot from that time period. I've also seen the lives of my fellow ministers (the senior pastors life also), who all have been left with the scares and knowledge that we let something very special slip past our grasp. None of us have really settled into what I would call is productive ministry since, and it's only been the last couple of years that I personally have started preaching again. I now minister in churches and this week I will be launching out in a different kind of street witnessing/praying ministry in my local area (Lord willing). I spent almost 10 years trying to get that "experience" of God's presence back before moving on to simply just obeying His call on my life. The senior pastor of that local fellowship and I keep in contact, he was a very gifted man who to this day does nothing in ministry for the Lord. I believe he'll go with me to some of my closer meetings, however many of my meetings have been out of the state of Ohio. I've turned my attention lately to my own area so as to get my beloved brother in the Lord back in the saddle again. :-)

With revival comes the need of absolute obedience. Obedience that often times transcends our own intellect or reasoning ability. God Bless, Bro. Daryl

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**Re: - posted by roadsign (), on: 2005/9/28 22:59**

Thanks for sharing, though that wasn't what I was expecting. It was honest. It seems like there was too much of the flesh in control - quenching the Spirit.

A few times I have seen the Spirit move and revival seemed about to break - and then, in a flash, it was quenched by humans - esp those who were in charge - the musicians or the preacher.

At least, these experiences help us to know that it is possible, and given the right conditions in the religious and social atmosphere, revival can break out and be sustained.

I think it's back again to my earlier comments about the need to have something happen (?crisis) in our lives/society that will break down our barriers.

**Re: Disturbing Barna Results - posted by Rahman, on: 2005/9/30 9:57**

Those drawn to this thread may find this one interesting also ...

Speaking of Barna Statistics: (a Christian Revolution?) ...

[http://www.sermonindex.net/modules/newbb/viewtopic.php?topic\\_id=7432&forum=35](http://www.sermonindex.net/modules/newbb/viewtopic.php?topic_id=7432&forum=35)

IHS,

Br. Rahman