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What About Revival?

Revival may be experienced on three levels, in the individual, the church or the community.

It is impossible to have a community revival where there has not been a church revival, and unless at least a few individuals seek and obtain a spiritual transformation in their own hearts, there can be no hope for their church, for a church is composed of individual Christians.

It is a mere commonplace to sing or pray, "Lord, send a revival, and let it begin in me." Where else can a spiritual quickening take place but in the individual life? There is no abstract "church" which can be revived apart from the men and women who compose it. The vague notion that there is somewhere a mysterious Body of Christ whose members are unknown, an invisible company upon whom the Holy Spirit can

fall in answer to prayer, is a grand fallacy. It serves as a hiding place from reality to believe that such an unidentified superchurch actually exists apart from the plain ordinary people we see in our Christian gatherings and in our churches from week to week. But we may as well face the truth: Christians are people and people can be identified. They have names and faces and homes and friends and jobs. They keep house, go to school, drive trucks, buy, sell, travel, eat and bathe and sleep exactly as other people do. The seed of God is in them and their names are written in heaven, but they are not invisible. The world knows who the Christians are.

That "glorious band, the chosen few, on whom the Spirit came" at Pentecost, were not wraiths nor were they composed of an extract of pure humanity dwelling on another plane. They were people. The names of some of them are listed by the Holy Spirit. Though it did not

suit God's purpose to furnish us with a complete roster of every one present, those mentioned were certainly human enough. When the Spirit came on that memorable day He could only fall upon persons who were present, who could be identified, who were known to each other and to the community. There was no invisible body for Him to enter. He entered the bodies and souls of the men and women who were in that prayer meeting.

No church is any better or worse than the individual Christians who compose it. To look beyond the known members to some mysterious group which is imagined to be there, secretly prepared for a revival, is to err seriously in a province where error can be costly.

One consequence of our

failure to see clearly the true nature of revival is that we wait for years for some supernatural manifestation that never comes, overlooking completely our own individual place in the desired awakening. Whatever God may do for a church must be done in the single unit, the one certain man or woman. Some things can happen only to the isolated, single person; they cannot be experienced en masse. Statistics show, for instance, that 100 babies are born in a certain city on a given day. Yet the birth of each baby is for that baby a unique experience, an isolated, personal thing. Fifty people die in a plane crash; while they die together they die separately, one at a time, each one undergoing the act of death in a loneliness of soul as utter as if he alone had died. Both birth and death are experienced by the individual in a loneness as complete as if only that one person had ever known them.

Three thousand persons were converted at Pentecost, but each one met his sin and his Savior alone. The spiritual birth, like the natural one, is for each one a unique, separate experience shared in by no one. And so with that uprush of resurgent life we call revival. It can come to the individual only. Though a visitation of divine life reaches 75 persons at once, yet it comes to each one singly. There can exist no collective body of believers that can be revived apart from the units that compose the body.

Understood aright these are truths full of great encouragement and good hope. Nothing can hinder you or me from experiencing the revival we need. It is a matter for God and the solitary heart. Nothing can prevent the spiritual rejuvenation of the soul that insists upon having it. Though that solitary man must live and walk

among persons religiously dead, he may experience the great transformation as certainly and as quickly as if he were in the most spiritual church in the world.

The man that *will* have God's best becomes at once the object of the personal attention of the Holy Spirit. Such a man will not be required to wait for the rest of the church to come alive. He will not be penalized for the failures of his fellow Christians, nor be asked to forego the blessing till his sleepy brethren catch up. God deals with the individual heart as exclusively as if only one existed.

If this should seem to be an unduly individualistic approach to revival, let it be remembered that religion is personal before it can be social. Every prophet, every reformer, every revivalist had to meet God alone before he could help the multitudes. The great leaders who went on to turn thousands to Christ had to begin with God and their own soul. The plain Christian of today must experience personal revival before he can hope to bring renewed spiritual life to his church. **By: A.W. Tozer**

May the Lord keep you and your family this Christmas season. *Thank you* for your blessing to this ministry this year and our prayer for you is that you will have a *personal revival* in your life.

Pastor Ken Geisendorfer

REVIVAL - GOD'S WAY

Where is the hope for Revival
God's Holy Spirit outpoured
Convicting of sin, and of judgment,
And righteousness of the Lord?

When nothing else is important
Only God's presence Divine,
When Christians quit worldly pleasures,
Then God, His ear will incline.

Desperate prayer for Revival
Will cleanse the Church by the Word.
Then clothed in spotless, white linen,
The Bride clears the way for her Lord.

Prayer is the key to Revival,
Prayer that is true Spirit-born,
Nights of compassionate weeping
Intercession for all the forlorn.

Then will the burdens be lifted,
Then all the sinners will cry,
Then all the chains will be loosened
And worldly passions will die.

The lost ones will yield to God's Spirit
When Christians, cleansed, weep and pray;
God's Living Water flows outward;
This is "REVIVAL - GOD'S WAY"

Estelle Gifford Jackson

