

Despite all of this, there are yet so many within the body of Christ who do not perceive the need for a spiritual awakening. Things have been going along just fine for them. They have a good-sized congregation with regular good-sized congregation with regular attendance; the offerings are consistent. Participation in church activities is fairly good too... a lot of nice people doing nice things. (Some would only hope to have a congregation like this.)

I trust that our little set-up hasn't fooled you. We have been describing the lukewarm Laodicean church. They were not wicked sinners and yet the Lord warned them quite sternly. *"I know your works, that you are neither cold nor hot. I could wish you were cold or hot. So then, because you are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will vomit you out of My mouth"* (Rev. 3:15). We had better pay attention!

Much of the Church has been satisfied with superficiality... and when exhorted to go farther into the things of God, we think it to be too much, too radical. In fact, our form of Christianity has become so diluted that when hearing of self-sacrifice with complete abandonment, or sacrificial giving, we consider it to pertain to the "deeper" Christian life. Dear child, these things are not deep; they are merely normal Christianity. The Lord loves you and desires that you would love Him with complete surrender. He would have you understand that there is so much more to the Christian faith than what you are presently experiencing... more than simply trying to stay away from sin, going to church on Sunday and putting a few dollars in the offering... so much more than your doctrines and particular methods of service.

It is only when we admit our sinful lukewarmness that we can truly repent... and we must recognize the depth of our spiritual poverty if we are to cry out for revival. Let's revisit the definition of normal Christianity: 1) A deep, abiding love for God with complete abandonment to His purposes. 2) A self-sacrificing love for others that flows in child-like faith and lowliness of heart. If you can honestly say that you and your church are red-hot for Jesus, loving and serving Him with all of your heart, then I suppose you don't need revival. But our guess is we all need a fresh touch from God.

Pray, and continue to pray. We are not speaking of some "pie in the sky" fantasy. Jesus wants to revive His Bride. Revival has occurred numerous times throughout history... and we need it again, before it is too late. Our sins are great, beloved. Even now the judgment of God is occurring to a lesser or greater degree. Make no mistake; His glory will be revealed in the midst of darkness, even gross darkness (Isaiah 60:1-2). We MUST realize the lateness of the hour! This is the season for fervent, effectual prayer for Revival. This should be one of your very highest priorities.

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Why the Church Needs Revival

There has been much said about Revival in some circles, but many still have no idea what it is... or that we are in such desperate need of it. The following is a synopsis of what Revival is and what it isn't ... and why the Christian Church of the 21st century should be earnestly seeking God for His Divine intervention.

What is Revival?

"It is time for You to act, O Lord, for they have regarded Your law as void." Ps 119:126

We have all heard about "revival meetings." A church or group comes together for a protracted period, having daily meetings for a week or more... to reinvigorate the faithful (and the not so faithful). Usually repentance is preached and the people are blessed and encouraged. These types of meetings are good, however, this is not what we are speaking of.

R.A. Torrey, in his book *How to Pray*, defined “Revival” in the year 1900: “A Revival is a time of quickening or impartation of life. Since God alone can give life, a Revival is a time when God visits His people and by the power of the Holy Spirit imparts new life to them, and through them imparts life to sinners dead in trespasses and sins. *New Life from God* - that is a Revival. A general Revival is a time when this new life is not confined to any one locality but is general throughout Christendom and the earth.” Torrey sensed that God wanted to do this again, sometime soon, and strongly exhorted his readers to earnestly pray for a general Revival (In 1902, Revival did breakout in Australia, then in Wales, 1904 and 1906 in Los Angeles!) There have been four great Revivals in the United States since colonial times: 1735, 1800, 1857 and 1905. They lasted for about one generation, 40 years. There are currently several regional spiritual revivals occurring around the globe.

Some of the obvious effects: A Revival revives the minister. He or she falls in love with Jesus all over again. They receive a fresh love for the Word of God and a renewed love for souls. Their preaching becomes filled with the power to convict of sin and to clearly portray Christ; the listener is transformed. Christians of all persuasions are touched in various ways, but all feel the need to step away from the lusts of the flesh and other worldly pursuits. They desire to pray and want to spend extended periods with God and with other believers. They also begin to do the work of evangelism, not by compulsion, but with burning passion. Works of mercy flow like a river. Revival periods are filled with joy, signs, wonders and miracles. Our glorious Father demonstrates His mighty power!

Revival also affects the society: Strong conviction of sin comes upon a region as the Holy One draws near. During these seasons, lives are changed by the power of the Holy Spirit and the “changed ones” change their city. This has happened many times in our history and some of the fruit still remains. Schools, orphanages and hospitals have all been established during Revival periods as the result of a fervent love for God and a love for others. In addition, social injustices like slavery and child labor were abolished. Works of mercy (*Salvation Army and Red Cross*) were established as compassion for the weak and the poor increased. Government was also reformed at every level, and industrial and agricultural productivity increased. Entire cities have been transformed, with police and judges having little work to do because the crime rate dropped so dramatically ... all as the result of a glorious spiritual awakening! Christian love permeates the region as yeast does dough. The thoughts of men start to rise from the base and temporal to the things that are eternal.

As on the day of Pentecost, first the church is filled (the 120 in the upper room) and then multitudes in the streets were converted. All praise and glory to our Lord, who makes everything new. Just when all appears to be lost, He shows Himself strong and rescues His people.

Why Do We Need Revival Now?

"Because you say, 'I am rich, have become wealthy, and have need of nothing'--and do not know that you are wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked-- I counsel you to buy from Me gold refined in the fire, that you may be rich; and white garments, that you may be

clothed, that the shame of your nakedness may not be revealed; and anoint your eyes with eye salve, that you may see." Revelations 3:17-18

We are usually so consumed with the affairs of daily living that we seldom consider the big picture. Nevertheless, most can realize there is something wrong... in the Church and in the world. Clearly, unrighteousness abounds throughout the land, and it is getting worse. One can hardly turn without hearing of murderous violence, child molestation, or seeing some indecent thing. And as far as the Church is concerned, we have grown lukewarm... trying to do the work of God without the power of His Spirit. We have plans and programs for just about everything, even works of mercy and evangelism, but there is little fruit that remains. And the decisions made during this generation by some of the clergy to endorse abortion and divorce... and to ordain active homosexuals, really puts it over the top. In addition, we love our toys, lusting after the bigger and more expensive. Surely the Church has become like the world, rather than standing for righteousness and being an influence for the better. And then there are the usual divisions and doctrinal things. God help us!

On a personal level, sometimes it seems as though you are just going through the motions, doesn't it? Your zeal has diminished, the fire has dwindled, and complacency is setting in. Worldly activities are much more appealing than when you first started the race. Does any of this sound familiar?