**What Is Revival And Spiritual Renewal**

**~2 Kings 22 and 2 Chron. 34**

**1) It is not man-centered.** To the credit of the Asbury campus, when big name Christian speakers or artists have contacted the campus to offer their services, Asbury said “no.” If the people wanted to come and find a seat and join in what is happening that would be okay but they did not want anything to take away from what God was doing.

It is a student and staff led movement. God is doing great things in the life of people who are at the school as students as well as with others who have visited. The goal of any revival is to bring glory to God, not to any person.

**2) It is not emotion driven though emotions can and usually are a part of it.** Revival does not have to be emotional, though it can be. But emotions do not necessitate that revival is happening. Revival takes place when we sense our need of a holy God more than anything else. Emotions can play a part, but they are not the “mark” of revival.

**3) It is not the same as evangelism.** There are churches that hold “revivals” and have as a goal to win the lost, which every church is supposed to do. But revival is for Christians, for those who claim to be Christ followers. It is the renewing of our hearts and minds before God. One of the fruits of revival is a desire to see people come to Christ, but it is not what revival is. This is for Christians. Now, keep in mind that there are many people within churches around the world who need to be saved and that does occur at revival as they recognize their lostness.

Not only that, but believers, as they are renewed, bring people to hear the message of God’s grace and salvation. So salvation is a fruit of God at work.

**4) It cannot be forced or manufactured.** Just because churches have meetings with the idea of seeking revival, that does not mean that revival has come. Revival is the Holy Spirit moving in people’s lives and that is not held to a calendar. In addition, and Charles Finney, back in the 1800’s, there are those who think that if you follow certain steps, you can make revival happen. I disagree. It takes the Holy Spirit working in people’s lives to see real renewal.

**5) It is not about gifted preachers or leaders.** Revival has started with people who were unknown, or not the best preachers. Jonathan Edwards of way back when was not a great orator but God used him to bring renewal. One revival came out of a prayer meeting started by a former businessman. That is the point behind revival. It is not about the persons doing something, but about God using different people to encourage and challenge us, and he can use anyone.

**Richard Owen Roberts** has a definition of revival that some may or may not agree with but I think does justice to what we are talking about this morning. He writes in his book, **“Revival”**,

**“In using the term *revival*, I am speaking of *an extraordinary movement of the Holy Spirit producing extraordinary results.”***

**Some thoughts on revival**

**1) Revival can happen when we are desperate to know God.** What is more important than God? Most of us would say “nothing” of course. But our actions speak louder than words. Now, I am not saying that we have to be in church every Sunday, that we cannot take time off, and if we miss a Sunday, that we are in need of revival. Please understand that I do not mean that at all.

**2) For renewal to happen, we must deal with any idols in our life.** We have talked about this somewhat in our first point but let us focus specifically on this as a point in our life when it comes to desiring renewal.

**3) Revival requires us not being passive, per se, but active, in our pursuit to do what is right and God honoring.** Others helped Josiah to carry out this cleansing of idolatry, but as noted, he took part in it. He was active in doing what he needed to in ridding the nation of anything that would draw the people back to idolatry.

**4) There must be a desire to be open to God working.** This means setting aside time to get to know Him through the Word and prayer. This means seeking Him by study and worship. It also means allowing the Word of God to show us where we need to improve in our life.

The nation of Judah, as a whole, was a mess and Josiah, as he sought the Lord, knew that action had to be taken to deal with the idolatry in the land.

**5) Revival requires dealing with sin (repentance).** We cannot take God’s convicting work of the Holy Spirit lightly. Repentance is a change of direction, not just a change of mind. In other words, when Josiah

**6) The Word of God must be the source book for changing lives.** We have already mentioned some things that revival is not. But one thing that leads to revival and is the centerpiece of it is the Word of God. “Why?” you may ask. Because it is the Scriptures that God uses to connect with us, to give us guidance and direction, to teach us theology.