

General Topics :: "Emotionalism" in Revival

"Emotionalism" in Revival - posted by Mattie, on: 2008/7/18 9:24

“Emotionalism” in Revival

Nothing is new under the sun. In every revival, there are criticism towards “excess” and emotionalism that is displayed in the assemblies. In every revival there has been accounts of people laughing, shouting, shaking, and spinning. And in every revival there are mixed reactions as to its authenticity. Thousands of bible-believers are torn between it being counterfeit and legit.

Take the Azusa Street revival as an example. We Charismatic believers prize and exalt Azusa Street as an authentic revival yet can forget that in the Azusa Street meetings there were accounts of people laughing, shaking, and some even barking. Does that make it godly? No, but despite the bizarre manifestations that may have come God still moved by the power of His Spirit.

There were accounts in the Welsh revival, and John Wesley meetings, and Jonathan Edwards, of criticism towards excess. But when we think of these revivals, much of the evangelical world prizes what God did in these spiritual awakenings.

Yet as much as we prize the past accounts of God’s workings in His church, we point the finger at moves of God like Brownsville, or any other meeting where people might shake or shout more than the usual.

Am I saying that every time someone shakes it is the Holy Spirit? No. But I am saying that if someone shakes it is not the Holy Spirit? No either.

On the day of Pentecost, while I don’t believe the disciples were in a drunken stupor looking like fools, I do believe there was MUCH emotion. So much was the emotion of this moment that onlookers mocked them saying they were filled with much wine.

How about King David? When the ark of God (typifying the presence of God) was carried back to Israel, David wasn’t looking around seeing the style of music or how people worshiped. He jumped, shouted, and spun around, looking like a madman to his own wife. Yet his response was that he would be more “undignified” than what he was.

Is there such a thing as fleshly manifestations? Absolutely. But we have to be careful when we judge a revival as a whole and put everything into the same box.

I believe Lakeland may have very well started as a move of the Holy Spirit. But too much emphasis is obviously being placed on miracles and manifestations rather than the word of God.

In every revival, the acid test if it is legit or not is the fruit that comes out of it. The fruit of the Spirit will always result in a greater love for Christ and for fellow man. If a revival is doing such a work, and people still shake or shout too much, I’ll take that over a meeting where there is much structure and much doctrine yet little life and love.

Are we called to “test” all things? Absolutely. But let’s be sure our testing is Scriptural and proper. Sometimes our “testing” may not be spiritual but carnal and critical without properly examining the whole.

Re: "Emotionalism" in Revival - posted by 4givenchris (), on: 2008/7/18 10:42

I believe experiencing revival will involve a lot of emotion, but at the same time true revival will always point people to God and give God glory. All disorder will always be by man and order by the Spirit. Paul said to do all things in order (1 Cor 14:40). I do believe all genuine revivals will have some mix of disorder and order. And I agree that the evidence of it being genuine is the fruit that comes from it

Re: - posted by Miccah (), on: 2008/7/18 11:01

Emotions are not bad. Having emotions while in prayer is not bad. People are emotional.

It is when people associate emotionalism and being emotional with "godliness" is where the line had to be drawn.

Trust me, once revival comes, I will be emotional as well :-)

Re: - posted by enid, on: 2008/7/18 11:28

I'd like to show you a little writing from a book I have.

'Andrew Murray stood in the back of the small South African church, astonished by what he saw. The congregation was in total chaos. The entire congregation was calling out to God, praying and crying.

The noise was deafening.

The thirty-two year old pastor, who had been praying desperately for revival to hit the churches of South Africa, refused to see this as the work of the Holy Spirit.

Stepping forward, he cried out, "People, be silent! God is a God of order, and this is confusion!"

No one heard him. The noise continued unabated, and Murray angrily left.'

The writing continues.

'Murray, however, believed that such a revival must come through the pastor, which is why he actually tried to stop the movement of the Holy Spirit when it began in 1860.

Dismayed at his failure to halt it, Murray returned to his small group Bible study and prayer.

When the revival hit this small group, again Murray started to halt it.

The Lord moved his heart, however, when a visitor said simply, "Be careful what you do. This is the Spirit of God."

I suppose what we are looking at is when emotion is worked up falsely, as opposed to a genuine move of God.

Re: - posted by Mattie, on: 2008/7/18 12:40

Whenever we have a settled mindset as to how a revival should come, we close our hearts to the way the Holy Spirit may choose to move in a particular place.

This is why many in Israel missed Yeshua when He came onto the scene. They had an expectation as to what the Kingdom of God looked like and what the Messiah would do.

There is a place for knowing the fruits that revival brings and discerning it in accordance with the Scriptures. But the way God moved in Wales was different in Azusa. And the way He moved in Hebrides was different from China.

Every move of God is unique. Not contradictory to God's nature or His character, but unique in the means it came.