

Articles and Sermons :: The Gathering by Jesse Morrell

The Gathering by Jesse Morrell - posted by sermonindex (), on: 2004/11/22 10:34

The Gathering
by Jesse Morrell

The World Best Youth Event Ever

The world's greatest youth event would not look like what many people think it would look like. The greatest youth event would not have a huge stage. It would not have fancy lights. Neither would it have any big name entertainers. These events are characterized by excitement, hype, and glamour but leave people empty, hardened, and god-less. Often these large events have everyone come to them, except for God. They are loud guns that shoot blanks. In the Lords parable of the great supper, those who the Master invited would not come. Nowadays everyone goes to the events, but it's the Master that does not come.

So what would the greatest youth event in history look like? The greatest youth event in the history of the world would be when God Himself comes down from His throne and dwells in the midst of men once again. There have been few occasions of this taking place in the past. In order to see how the greatest event would look like, let's take a look and see what some of the great events in the past looked like.

When I think about the ministry of John the Baptist, as short lived as it was, I can't help but to be deeply challenged. It was so far different from what we see today, and yet it was far more effective. John the Baptist didn't go to Bible College. John never took classes on how to write a sermon or took a course on church growth plans. There was nothing attractive about the man himself at all. The man must have smelled like something awful living in the desert and eating bugs. He didn't drive around in big fancy cars, wear business suits, and wear expensive watches. He wore camel's hair and wore a leather girdle around his waste. And yet the bible says that all of Judea and all of Jerusalem came out to hear him and were baptized by him. People young and old, educated and uneducated, all people came out and were converted by this man's ministry. John was in fact a youth leader in that sense and yet was nothing like the youth leaders we see today. Youth leaders today seem to have everything, except the power of God while John had nothing at all except for the Lord and His power.

Then there was Phillip the Evangelist. But Phillip was not always an Evangelist. He was at one point Phillip the bus boy. The lowly table waiter, the dish washer, and He became the amazing soul winner! Without an education, without financial help, without the use of marketing and promotion, but with the Lord, He saw youth come to Christ by the multitude. Phillip had gone to a city and the entire city was converted. Before he left, everyone knew who he was and who the Savior was. How many youth pastors today live in cities and even small towns and have labored for years and years and yet the community still has no idea who they are? When you labor without the Lord, you can produce anything you want, except for genuine fruit to the Lord.

There was also John and Charles Wesley who forever changed the history of England along with the history of the world. Without the use of dramas and skits, without the use of entertainers and stages, without even amplification these brothers so pierced and penetrated the people of England that it would be almost impossible to study the history of England without studying the life of these men. Thousands upon thousands of people flocked to the fields to hear them like sheep flock to a Shepherd for food. When there is a fire in the neighborhood, everyone comes out to watch it. Wherever these men went everyone came out to watch them burn for God. Although not formally "youth leaders", these men genuinely reached more youth for Christ then, I would dare to say, any of the large youth conferences that there are today.

We must never forget Duncan Campbell who, in the Hebrides revivals, saw multitudes of young people flee to Christ to be saved from the wrath that's certain to come. While the church was in prayer one evening, the fear of God struck a dance where young people were gathered to have a good time. All of them, over a hundred of them, ran from the dance, Duncan said, "as though fleeing from a plague". They were so tremendously terrified and awfully awakened at the sudden revelation and realization that they were deserving of damnation, that the only place they thought of where they might find any deliverance from this new found horror was at the church. This true phenomenon of real revival is not like the tra

gedies of mass, false, conversions see today. Duncan said "God stepped down...what was that, revival? Revival! Not an evangelist, not a special effort, not anything at all organized from the daises of human endeavor. But an awareness of God that gripped the whole community, so much so that work stopped. I can remember once within twenty four hours addressing eight meetings." And again he said "The power of God swept through the village. Not a preacher, nothing organized, and there wasn't a single house that hadn't a person saved. Now my dear people I can't explain this, except to say that God is sovereign." The most awe striking truth about this massive movement is that it produced zero backsliders. This reveals the difference between the working of God and the working of man.

In the early years of Leonard Ravenhill, he and five other college students walked the length and breadth of England ministering in the streets for three years. Sleeping in fields unless a church welcomed them in, with no money often going months without any wages, they would minister in the open-air to the lost. They would wait outside the movie houses and give their testimonies as people came out. As the crowds of people walked by they were like fish in a river bound to get caught in the fishermen's net that waited for them. The amazing feature of these events was that there were no attractive singers or nice buildings to attract the people and yet the people would stand an hour or two hours in the cold to hear them! These meetings would be so large at times that the traffic would be blocked. The police would drag Leonard into the court house to see the Judge. He would go from the movie house to the court house but he ministered the truth of God in both places! In court he would use the opportunity for the Lord and would tell the judge that one day he too will be in a court room, but it will be the court room of God. The genuine ministry of men like this has been replaced with counterfeit today. Rather than men being convicted they are being comforted. The big name ministers have large numbers of people gather when they come, but they leave nothing behind when they've gone! While Leonard said "at night we would kneel in the streets and people would get saved. The churches we started and still standing today."

All these stories are about men who didn't have what the big conferences do have today. They didn't have modern promotional methods. They didn't have a lot of money. They didn't have what many conferences require for putting them on. But all these stories are about men who did have what many large conferences do not have today. They had the Spirit and power of God that they sought after in prayer. I am not in any ways trying to mock or criticize what Christians are trying to do today. I am simply trying to get honest. The church today lacks in power because the church today lacks in prayer. The power of God is found inside the presence of God which can only be accessed through prayer with God. God will not come down like rain on a dry desert as He has in the past until the church gets down on her knees in sweet intercession as she has in the past.

E. M. Bounds wrote "All the true revivals have been born in prayer. When God's people become so concerned about the state of religion that they lay on their faces day and night in earnest supplication, the blessing will be sure to fall. It is the same all down the ages. Every revival of which we have any record has been bathed in prayer." It would be far easier to show me a man who has lived life without breathing then it would be to show me a Christian who has changed history without praying. John Livingston spent the entire night in prayer before he preached a sermon on Ezekiel 36:25, 26, which resulted in the conversion of five hundred people. It's said that Richard Baxter "stained his study walls with praying breath; and after becoming thus anointed with the unction of the Holy Spirit he sent a river of living water over Kidderminster." George Whitfield once prayed "Oh Lord, give me souls or take my souls." It's also said that Whitfield, after praying, "Once went to the Devil's fair and took more than a thousand souls out of the paw of the lion in a single day." Charles Finney said, "I once knew a minister who had a revival fourteen winters in succession. I did not know how to account for it till I saw one of his members get up in a prayer meeting and make a confession. 'Brethren' He said, 'I have been long in the habit of praying every Saturday night till after midnight for the descent of the Holy Spirit among us. And now, brethren (and he began to weep), I confess that I have neglected it for two or three weeks.' The secret was out. That minister had a praying church."

We are commanded to "pray without ceasing". (1 Thessalonians 5:17). Well what is it that we ought to be praying for? We must pray for laborers to be sent out and to pray that God's Kingdom comes down from Heaven and be established on earth. If revival is not God's comings being on earth, as it is in Heaven, then I don't know what revival is. We sing songs like "As the deer pants for the water, so my soul longs after you" but if we truly longed after God as a starving man longs for food, we would soon have Him. The Lord does not prostitute His presence around, revealing Himself to every one who wants a cheap thrill. But that's what we want Him to do today. Rather than making ourselves ready for the Bridegroom, we want the Lord to come so we can enjoy His presence along with our sins, but it will never happen. The only way will be if we turn from our sins in humility and seek after the Lord with all our hearts. Hype is no substitute for holiness.

I'm convinced that we have lost our focus and are pouring into methods and techniques deceiving ourselves that we are helping when we are truly hurting this generation. There are youth groups that have basket ball courts and video game

s and yet there isn't anyone living holy and seeking after the Lord. The justification is "just ask them, they know the scriptures" but do they know the God of the scriptures? Do they live by the Word? If not then their condemnation will be greater than the kids in the world who don't even know the bible. It would have been better for some of these youth groups not to even know the scriptures at all then to know them and still walk in disobedience towards God.

Our twisted logic convinced us that the kids won't come to youth group if there aren't any video games or sports. Without the explosions and rock bands why would this generation even come to our events? Let me tell a true story. While I was a new Christian in a youth group I noticed that I was not the only one that was unsatisfied with our youth group. There was plenty of pizza but no power. There was an abundance of snacks but there was a bankruptcy of spirituality. So I started a bible study in my basement. In my basement I had couches, a TV and VCR, darts and a dart board, turn tables, a stereo, a ping pong table, air hockey table, and all these types of things I thought everyone could enjoy after the bible study. I set up blue, green, yellow, and all different color lights to add to the atmosphere. We started with 4 people but grew rapidly to roughly 30 in less than a month. This is the amazing part. The study would start at around 7 o'clock and sometimes they wouldn't leave until midnight and after. They stayed to talk about God and didn't stay for the games. Not even once did we finish the bible study and hang around playing with all the little toys. Not even once! We would sit there for hours and hours and talk about the Word! The same youth group that was apparently dead at church suddenly became alive and interested in the things of God. And now these same people that used to meet in my basement have their own ministry and are trying to change the world.

We have had enough excuses given to us in order to cover up the lacking there is of the power of God in our outreaches. We have become masters of manipulating the multitudes. We can get large crowds of people at an altar to repeat a prayer, yet what happens when they leave? They keep living the same way they've always lived. Our excuse is "bad follow-up". No! It wasn't bad follow-up. You could put a mustang sticker on a Ford and possibly fool some of the simple minded, but if you merely look at it and see how it drives you will soon discover the fraud. Likewise we can put the Christian label on the multitudes that come to our altars, but if you merely look closely at their lives and see how they live you will soon realize our mistake. We wrongfully assume that these people are actually alive in Christ when they are indeed dead in their trespassing and sins.

They've come for fun
They've come for food
They've come for everything
Except to meet You

This generation can only eat what they are given, and what are they being given? Pizza, bands, games, fancy lights, and all of these things! Wouldn't it be nice if it were that easy? Well it's not! We have sold out to the way of the world so now my generation is not going the way of the Lord. If ever we want to see the world reached, it's going to cost us. When I was leading the bible study I took it very seriously. God had entrusted it to me and I refused to be unfaithful with it. The truth was, I hadn't been a Christian long and those who were coming were Christians much longer than I had been. But this was the ministry that the Lord gave me. I had graduated High School about two and a half years early and so I was working in a factory at the time. I didn't have a car or a license but I rode a bike every morning across town to work. After working all day long in the factory, I would come home and study, write, and pray for the group all night long and then when the sun came up I'd ride to work again. It took me a long time to put together a lesson, since I did not know much about the bible. But I had to do it. I saw no other options.

This generation will only be reached if we sacrifice and pour ourselves out. Even if that means pouring ourselves out until there is nothing left to give. It isn't until we get to the point that we can not pour out ourselves any longer that God is able to pour Himself out through us. The calling that God has Christians today must be taken seriously. God will not say on Judgment Day "why did you work so hard? It wasn't really that important." I fear we will only realize how important and valuable the ministry is that God has entrusted to us when it is too late and we see souls being bound hand and foot and cast into hell.

In summary, the greatest youth event ever would be when people come from near and far to meet with God, and not with any other type of motive. Not to hear a preacher or to listen to a band. Not to get away for the weekend or to hang out with their friends. The absolute greatest youth movement will be when God comes down in answer to the prayers of His Saints.

Take comfort and be of good cheer Christian! There is a cure to this craziness! If we cleanse ourselves and cry out to God, it is promised that the God who answers by fire will hear from Heaven. C. H. Spurgeon said "Never think that a pra

ying heart pleads to a deaf God.Â” The conversion of the masses can not be organized for; it can only be agonized over. The hearts of sinners are so hard because the knees of Christians are so soft! Away with the methods of man that are damning lost souls. Away with cop out excuses for being powerless. Away with complacency that watches our children blindly dance with delight in the midst of the deadly hurricane of sin. Away with it all! And to our neglected prayer closets to enter into the throne room of God in order to plead with the Lord to let loose the power which is so abundantly stored up for those who seek it.

Quotes:

-Duncan Campbell quote from the Â”Revival HymnÂ” and Â”Young Donald Mcphail praysÂ” compilations found at www.fireonthealtar.com

-Quotes from E. M. Bounds, from Charles Finney, for Richard Baxter and for George Whitfield are all taken from Â”The Complete Works of E. M. Bounds on PrayerÂ” pg 363.

-C. H. Spurgeon quote from: Â”Besides Still Waters, Words of Comfort for the SoulÂ” by Spurgeon.

Re: The Gathering by Jesse Morrell - posted by dougkristen (), on: 2004/11/22 12:32

Quote:
-----We are commanded to Â”pray without ceasingÂ”. (1 Thessalonians 5:17). Well what is it that we ought to be praying for? We must pray for laborers to be sent out and to pray that Gods Kingdom comes down from Heaven and be established on earth. If revival is not Gods coming being on earth, as it is in Heaven, then I don't know what revival is. We sing songs like Â”As the deer pants for the water, so my soul longs after youÂ” but if we truly longed after God as a starving man longs for food, we would soon have Him. The Lord does not prostitute His presence around, revealing Himself to everyone who wants a cheap thrill. But that's what we want Him to do today. Rather than making ourselves ready for the Bridegroom, we want the Lord to come so we can enjoy His presence along with our sins, but it will never happen. The only way will be if we turn from our sins in humility and seek after the Lord with all our hearts. Hype is no substitute for holiness.

This is so true here. We want God's presence with our sins. NOT! This won't happen. God says that we must come into His presence with a clean heart or we will not see the Lord. Amen?

If you have not read this article, read it!

Grace,
Doug

Re: The Gathering by Jesse Morrell - posted by RobertW (), on: 2004/11/22 14:41

Quote:
-----Our twisted logic convinced us that the kids won't come to youth group if there aren't any video games or sports. Without the explosions and rock bands why would this generation even come to our events?

It takes time to make this transition within the youth group once it is engrained into the young people. I have been a youth pastor for a few years now and have emphasized Spiritual things almost to the exclusion of these other things. I preach messages stronger than adults could handle and there are times at the altar of prayer that last generally an hour or more after the adults are long gone. I told our youth last week that if revival comes it will come in spite of many of the adults. They are way too set in their ways and comfortable in most cases to see revival. I have found that they generally get in the way of God moving in the youth; it is my experience and others I have talked to.

Adults are quicker to want to get the youth in a party atmosphere than the teens. Their parents will come and take them from an altar service in order to 'get home.' I would never come take my kids from an altar service. Yet, I see it almost every week.

A LUKEWARM youth group is an incubator for sin. I appreciate Bro. Jesse and his bold message and I plan to share some of these things with my youth tomorrow night Lord willing.

God Bless,

-Robert

Re: Heartscry - posted by DezCall (), on: 2004/11/22 15:20

These where right words on the right time!

Bend me! Bend me! Lord, help me to put faith above feeling in my life. I will obey You, no matter how I feel, no matter what my thoughts are like. But for the strength to stand, I desperately need You, Lord Jesus! You must be my All in all! Only You can keep us from falling (Judah 24). There's no power in me. There's only power in You.

Help us to draw near to You and to believe that You will draw near to us. *"Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief" (Mark 9:24)*. Light Holy Ghost fire in our hearts...not to impress people, to gather large crowds or to become popular. No, keep us helpless and unknown...but may this world see the living God once again!

Thanks for this great article Lord (I first wanted to write "Jesse" here...). Be encouraged Jesse, the Lord is truly is the Author and Perfecter of your faith!

I'm still so weak and in the midst of a constant struggle with sin. God, be merciful to your poor servant. Let not your name be blasphemed because of me and my deeds in secret. *"Teach me thy way, O LORD; I will walk in thy truth: unite my heart to fear thy name.*

O turn unto me, and have mercy upon me; give thy strength unto thy servant, and save the son of thine handmaid" (Psalm 86:11,16)

"Satan trembles when he sees, the weakest saint upon his knees". Oh to practice this faith once again. That I would just believe it! I want to believe it! Thanks be to God, our Christian live is not about having a big faith, but knowing a great God!

May the nails keep me on the cross,

A heartscry,

Paul

Re:, on: 2004/11/23 1:14

Hey,

As I was reading through I realized I made a mistake in one of the sentences. It was:

"If revival is not Gods comings being on earth, as it is in Heaven, then I don't know what revival is."

It's suppose to say:

"If revival is not Gods Kingdom coming and being established on earth, as it is in Heaven, then I don't know what revival is."