



Revivals And Church History :: Preparing for Revival

Preparing for Revival - posted by lwpray (), on: 2003/9/16 3:35

The Lewis Awakening

I believe this gracious movement of the Holy Spirit - The Lewis Awakening in 1949 - began in a prayer burden; indeed there is no doubt about that.

It began in a small group who were really burdened. They entered into a covenant with God that they would give Him no rest until He had made Jerusalem a praise in the earth.

They waited. The months passed, and nothing happened, until one young man took up his Bible and read from Psalm 24: "Who shall stand in His holy place? He that hath clean hands and a pure heart. . . He shall receive the blessing from the Lord."

The young man closed the Bible and, looking at his companions on their knees before God, he cried: "Brethren, it is just so much humbug to be waiting thus night after night, month after month, if we ourselves are not right with God. I must ask myself - 'Is my heart pure? Are my hands clean?'"

DUNCAN CAMPBELL.

Re: Preparing for Revival - posted by lwpray (), on: 2003/9/16 3:37

"Break up your fallow ground: for it is time to seek the Lord, till He come and rain righteousness upon you" (Hos. 10:12).

We must now proceed to the conditions under which God is pleased to pour out this blessing. Although God is the source of all revival, there are conditions that He expects His people to fulfil before they are ready to receive the outpouring of the Spirit. Hosea sets these before us in one of the most comprehensive statements on the way of revival to be found in Scripture. "Break up your fallow ground" - that is heart-preparation: "for it is time to seek the Lord, till . . ." - that is prevailing prayer "He come and rain righteousness upon you" - that is spiritual revival.

Here then are set before us the two all-inclusive conditions: heart-preparation and prevailing prayer. We cannot rightly separate them, for, as the verse suggests, they are intimately related. Sometimes when souls truly seek God they are shown their sin and barrenness, and heart-brokenness follows. With others, it is out of a time of heart-brokenness that they really begin to pray.

From a group of missionaries in India seeking revival in 1940 there comes this personal testimony of one of them: "While living alone I got desperate. God showed me first that my life was practically prayerless except for my anaemic morning and evening 'devotions'. I saw the need for intense and persistent intercession, so I gave myself to prayer. Then followed deep conviction of personal sin and backsliding. One thing after another had to come out, and my heart was completely broken as time after time I saw His wounds and heard His royal pardon. I marvelled at His longsuffering, and trembled in case He should ever leave me in anger at last. I felt this fear until I saw His crowning glory" (The Price They Paid).

This illustrates how these two conditions may be related in experience.

From:
IN THE DAY OF THY POWER
The Scriptural Principles of Revival
By Arthur Wallis

CHAPTER SEVEN
THE PREPARED HEART

Re: Preparing for Revival - posted by lwpray (), on: 2003/9/17 1:49

Fallow Ground

“Break up your fallow ground” is the figure that the prophet uses to impress this need of heart-preparation. What is fallow ground? It is not wilderness, and therefore we cannot apply his words to the unregenerate. It is not necessarily land that has returned to the wilderness state through being wilfully abandoned, so it is not the backsliders who are primarily in view.

It is simply ground which has in the past yielded fruit, but has now become largely unproductive through lack of cultivation, land that is lying idle. Seed may be sown upon it in abundance, the heavens might pour out a copious rain, but what would be the good of either so long as the ground is in this uncultivated state? As we look out upon the state of the church today, as we look within at the condition of our own hearts, we cannot but admit the accuracy of Hosea’s figure. Vast tracts of fallow ground in the hearts of professing Christians surely constitute the greatest barrier to the rain of revival. The characteristics of fallow ground must now be examined more closely.

Firstly, it is hard. The soil has become tightly packed; the clods are thick and coarse; men and animals have heedlessly crossed it so that it possesses a hard and brittle crust. Here is the way God describes the hearts of believers when they have become insensitive to the sins that grieve the Holy Spirit, and unresponsive to His still small voice. Here are hearts that have grown cold towards the Lord and His people, and indifferent towards the souls of the perishing.

They are marked by formality in their fulfilment of spiritual obligations, and cold orthodoxy in their contention for the faith. This state of heart will often lead to a belligerent and graceless defence of minor points of doctrine, or to a holding fast the tradition of the elders. These are they who “strain out the gnat and swallow the camel” (Matt. 23:24); they “tithed mint. . . and pass over judgment and the love of God” (Luke 11:42). They profess much and possess little; they have all the right expressions but few of the right experiences.

In this state believers may diligently attend the ministry of God’s word, the heart may be sown continually with the incorruptible seed, but there is no fruit unto holiness, for like the way-side ground in the parable, the seed lies upon the surface, and is quickly devoured by the agents of the Evil one (Matt. 13:4).

Such are “ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth” (2 Tim. 3: 7). Perhaps this is the main reason why there appears to be so little effectual result from so much ministry of the word. It is all too true of the church today, “Ye have sown much and bring in little.”

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Re: - posted by InTheLight (), on: 2003/9/17 13:27

Here's some more on breaking up fallow ground from Charles Finney;

(http://www.gospeltruth.net/1868Lect_on_Rev_of_Rel/68revlec03.htm) How To Promote a Revival

In Christ,

Ron

Re: Preparing for Revival - posted by lwpray (), on: 2003/9/19 5:50

Secondly, fallow ground is weed-covered: One of the main objects in cultivation is to eliminate weeds that would overrun the good seed or the growing plants. Thorns and thistles are part of the curse and typify sin (Gen. 3:18). Such weeds abound on fallow ground, so Jeremiah exhorts the people, "Break up your fallow ground, and sow not among thorns" (Jer. 4:3). Evidently they did not heed his words, for he said later, "They have sown wheat and have reaped thorns" (Jer. 12:13). Christ also described ground in the parable of the sower where thorns sprang up and choked the good seed. Where the diligent cultivation of the soul is lacking, one may be sure that thorns and thistles abound. As the gardener well knows, the weeds need not be wilfully encouraged in order to flourish; they are the product of sloth, indifference, and neglect. A greater than Solomon, even He that searcheth the hearts, might have to say of many, "I went by the field of the slothful . . . and, lo, it was all grown over with thorns" (Prov. 24:30, 31).

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Re: - posted by crsschk (), on: 2003/9/19 10:22

This pierce's. As it should.

Quote:

Here is the way God describes the hearts of believers when they have become insensitive to the sins that grieve the Holy Spirit, and unresponsive to His still small voice.

In principal, all I can think of is "Now when they heard this, they were cut to the heart, and said to Peter and the Brethren, what shall we do?"

Acts 2:37

Repent.
Open my ears Lord.
Calm my agitated spirit so I can be sensitive to your prompting.
Let me not grieve You.

Re: - posted by sermonindex (), on: 2003/9/19 13:43

Quote:
-----Let me not grieve You.

Brother I was reading ephesians last night and it was impressed upon me that we need to continually seek what is pleasing to the Lord.

"and *find out* what **pleases the Lord**" - Ephesians 5:10

If we desire to please the Lord in everything we do then we will not grieve him. the words 'find out' are in the KJV 'proving' this word is connected with 'walk'.

Proving (dokimazontes). Testing and so proving.

construed with "walk" (Eph_5:8; Rom_12:1-2). As we prove a coin by the eye and the ear, and by using it, so by accurate and continued study, and above all by practice and experimental trial, we may prove or test "what is acceptable unto the Lord." This is the office of "light," of which believers are "children," to manifest what each thing is, whether sightly or un-

sightly.
- JFB Commentary

Re: Preparing for Revival - posted by lwpray (), on: 2003/9/23 15:36

Thirdly, fallow ground is of necessity unfruitful. Despite abundant sowing and copious showers, the ground remains largely barren because of its condition. The fruit that God expects the believer to bring forth is not religious activity, or even zealous Christian service, so much as Christ-like character as set forth in Galatians 5, verse 22: "The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, meekness, self-control." Fruit is practical holiness in thought, word, and deed; fruit is likeness to Jesus Christ. It is possible to be zealously active in Christian service, and yet, when a hungry Saviour comes to us as to the fig tree, yearning for fruit, He finds nothing but leaves. Who can measure His intense longing for fruit from those who are "God's husbandry"?

All God's dealings with us, in mercy or in judgment, are designed to produce "fruit", "more fruit", "much fruit" (John 15:2, 5). How much does He find? How much is choked by weeds? Peter explains clearly how to avoid becoming fallow ground, by "adding on your part all diligence" to produce the fruit of righteousness, "For", says he, "if these things are yours and abound, they make you to be not idle nor unfruitful unto the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ" (2 Pet. 1:5-8).

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Re: Preparing for Revival - posted by lwpray (), on: 2003/9/27 4:38

Breaking Up

If Hosea's figure of fallow ground is an accurate description of our own hearts, and if we are deeply concerned to remedy the situation, then we must face this command, "Break up your fallow ground." There is a sense in which God may break us in order to bless us, but here God places the onus upon us by commanding us to do it. It is as dangerous to expect God, by some sovereign act, to do for us what He has commanded us to do for ourselves, as it is to strive to do for ourselves what He has promised to do for us. In the path of spiritual progress there is no little emphasis in Scripture on the part the believer has to play. We read, "Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye doubleminded" (Jas. 4:8), and again, "Let us cleanse ourselves from all defilement of flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God" (2 Cor. 7:1). Thus it is with this question of heart-preparation; the responsibility is ours.

This is not only true in relation to revival, but in all Christian service and witness: "The preparations of the heart belong to man: but the answer of the tongue is from the Lord" (Prov. 16:1). So there is our part and God's part. If we make it our business to have prepared hearts, God will make it His business to fill our mouths with arguments which our adversaries shall not be able to gainsay or resist. "Sanctify in your hearts Christ as Lord," says Peter, and you will be "ready always to give answer to every man that asketh you a reason concerning the hope that is in you" (1 Pet. 3:15). God's contention with Israel was that they were "a stubborn and rebellious generation, a generation that prepared not their heart" (Ps. 78:8).

If we are to have revival it must come from heaven, it must be the result of divine intervention, but how can we expect God to rain righteousness upon us before we have broken up the fallow ground? The words of Samuel should come as a challenge to the people of God today: "Prepare your hearts unto the Lord, and serve Him only: and He will deliver you out of the hand of the Philistines" (1 Sam. 7:3). Are you ready to obey?

To "break up the fallow ground" of our hearts means to bring them to a humble and contrite state before God, for this is the only state of heart that God can revive, the only state that is ready for the rain of revival. "For thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, Whose name is Holy; I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones" (Isa. 57:15).

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Re: Preparing for Revival - posted by lwpray (), on: 2003/10/1 8:10

Here then is the first great condition of revival, that brokenness of heart that is sensitive to the least touch of the Spirit, and that has only to know the will of God to do it. One may cross fallow ground and not see where the feet have trod - no impression has been made. But when the plough and the harrow have done their work, and the soil is soft and friable, then the print of the foot is clearly seen. When our hearts are sensitive, responsive, and impressionable to the movements of God across our lives, we may be sure that the fallow ground is broken. My reader, have you come to this point? Are you willing for God to bring you there? If so, the first step is with you. There must be, in the words of saintly Robert Chapman, "a looking back, and a dealing afresh with God respecting past iniquities". This is the way to a humble and contrite heart.

Having faced what is implied in this command to break up the fallow ground, let us nevertheless remember that ploughing is not reaping; that breaking up the fallow ground is not the coming of the showers; that repentance is not revival. The one is but the pathway to the other. The farmer has no interest in ploughing save as the indispensable means to the harvest. "Doth the plow-man plow continually to sow? Doth he continually open and break the clods of his ground? When he hath made plain the face thereof, doth he not cast abroad the fitches, and scatter the cummin, and put in the wheat in rows. . . For his God doth instruct him aright, and doth teach him" (Isa. 28:24). In other words, the ploughman is not forever ploughing and breaking up the ground. He does so until he has "made plain the face thereof", until the ground is smooth and soft and even, and then he moves on to the next operation, the sowing of the seed.

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Re: Preparing for Revival - posted by lwpray (), on: 2003/10/4 2:20

Brokenness is not revival; it is a vital and indispensable step towards it. To make it an end instead of a means is not only to miss that fuller end that God desires, but may also lead us into an unhealthy introspection, if not into definite bondage. But how are we to know when the breaking up has been done to God's satisfaction? He alone can reveal this to us, as Isaiah tells us - "For his God doth instruct him aright, and doth teach him" (verse 26). We cannot, of course, put these different processes of preparation into watertight compartments, for they are too intimately related, and dependent the one upon the other.

As the man who is sowing or reaping now, will, in a few months hence, be ploughing once again; so God has often to bring the yielded servant back from his sowing or reaping to a deeper and more thorough ploughing. But with all these divine cycles there should be progress. Revival, however, is not ploughing or sowing, but the rain of ingathering. If a movement does, not lead to reaping one may question whether it is revival in the full sense of the word.

The importance of heart-preparation becomes even clearer when seen in relation to prayer, the next vital step towards revival. The prepared heart becomes the praying heart that prevails with God.

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