



## Revivals And Church History :: God's Terms For Revival By A. E. Reinschmidt

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### God's Terms For Revival

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“If I shut up heaven If My people shall then will I hear forgive and heal their land” (2 Chr. 7:13-14).

There are two classes of sinners: those inside "the camp," and those outside. Those inside are, as a rule, somewhat penitent; those outside are impenitent.

The Lord always begins with those on the inside: "If My people." Judgment must always begin at the house of God (1 Pet. 4:17). The Lord begins on the inside and works outward with individuals or groups alike. He begins with the best and works out through them to the worst. No revival ever came to the "sinners" outside unless it first came to, and then through, some of those within the camp of the Lord.

What are God's terms?

### Humility

"If My people shall humble themselves." This condition is often overlooked. Most people care little enough for prayer, but less still for humility. But if we do not meet this first condition, we certainly cannot meet the other three. A change of attitude comes first, even before prayer.

Some people suppose that anyone can pray no matter what his attitude may be. But not so. Before one can truly pray he must first remove the barrier of an independent spirit and attitude from between himself and the Lord. Then he may pray.

"Let them come near; then let them speak" (Isa. 41:1). We have to come down to come near.

### Prayer

After self-humbling comes prayer: "Humble themselves and pray." Humility, we have seen, brings one over to God's side, and now that one is "on praying grounds and interceding terms," as they used to say in the old-fashioned meetings. Prayer is bound up with humility.

Many people are not humble enough to pray. Because they are not humble have never gone through the experience of having their spirit "broken" they are not near enough to God to care much for prayer. They have not the Spirit of prayer for the reason that their own independent spirit excludes Him from their heart.

This is why most of the effort to get people to give themselves to a life of prayer fails of its object. The truth is, one can not live the prayer life except he shall first make a prayer-covenant with God, and also receive the Spirit of God as the Spirit of prayer. Just as the Holy Spirit may be to us the "Spirit of faith," or the "Spirit of wisdom and understanding" so may we have Him as the "Spirit of prayer." But as we have already intimated, the Holy Spirit can have little place in a heart that has not been humbled and broken. "Broken up" not broken down.

Prayer is effective in direct proportion to one's nearness to God. Hence the Lord calls us to come near to Him by humbling ourselves so that we can pray. It goes without saying that our prayer in this case should be for mercy and for "grace to help in time of need." There is no suggestion here of praying for a revival among those outside. Rather, it is God's purpose that His own people shall do certain things prayer among them which will bring them back to Him. Then He will "heal their land."

But humility and prayer are not enough. God calls us to take another step, which will bring us still nearer to Himself.

#### Seek My Face

"If My people shall seek My face." The Lord is not satisfied with us no matter how great "prayer experts" we may be if we do not become personally acquainted with Himself. It is one thing to know how to so pray as to "move the Hand that moves the world"; it is quite another thing to know the One whose hand it is that moves the world. God wants fellowship.

God wants ourselves, not merely a chance to fill our empty baskets for us. If some of us had children who should treat us as we treat our Heavenly Father, we would die of a broken heart! "When Thou saidst seek ye My face, my heart shall aid unto Thee, Thy face, Lord, will I seek" (Psa. 27:8). This means "waiting on the Lord." It means that we shall become acquainted with Him. It means coming very close to Him so that we may look into His face and read His countenance and catch His thoughts.

The Lord yearns for an intimate, confidential relationship with His children. In this, however, He is for the most part disappointed in us. Remember, seeking His face is one of the major conditions upon which the promissory part of our text depends: "If My people shall humble themselves and pray and seek My face"

#### Turn from Wicked Ways

God calls His own people to "turn from their wicked ways." He demands, as the first condition of recovery, a change of attitude. His fourth condition calls for a changing of our ways.

Only those Christians who have had long experience in the things of God will appreciate His wisdom in mentioning our "wicked ways" last and not first. It is not until one has humbled himself, and has learned something of a life of prayer, and has had some experience in seeking God's face that he comes to anything like a clear recognition of his own "wicked ways."

God's people are often oblivious to their very wickedest ways, deep, subtle, interior ways, infinitely more wicked than those "ways" that are manifest to sight. These "wicked ways" are not the outward acts so much, but the inward, hidden thoughts and intents of the heart "the secret motives and desires which no one but God can read."

Though we may have been saved from our "doings" we need also to be saved from what we are as well. This means we must be sanctified. We must be cleansed "from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God" (2 Cor. 7:1).

There is too little sympathy, charity or compassion for one another among most Christians, especially for those very members of His body who need help the most. No one could possibly have any more love for Christ than he has for His body. Whoever will judge, criticize, condemn or blame a member of the body will (and does) do these things to Christ Himself. "Inasmuch as ye did it ye did it unto Me" (Matt. 25:40). It is for these things that God's displeasure is brought upon us; more than for the "corruptions" in the world outside.

#### God's Gracious Promise

"Then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land." The principles behind all prayer truth, in both Testaments, are unchangeable and eternal. Therefore, when we shall begin to meet these four conditions contained in God's challenge, we may and must begin to look for something to come to pass. We are sure that these words apply to any group, any church, any nation, any individual any time, and that compliance with God's terms will never fail to bring those things which He has promised.

Have we become estranged from Him? He will incline and hear us. Have we sinned against Him? He will forgive "abundantly pardon" (Isa. 55:7). Have we brought an epidemic of pestilence upon us? He will heal! We do not believe there is any prayer teaching in the Bible more fundamental or more suitable to our present needs than this truth we are dealing with just now.

And how simple God's plan is! On the one hand is the desolated land. Everything is dried up for lack of the "showers of blessing"; swarms of dreadful locusts from the pit devour everything that is left, and pestilence lies upon the spirits, so

uls and bodies of mankind.

On the other hand, God waits to incline Himself and hear us, to forgive our sin and to heal the whole land. But there is a breach between "the land" and the Lord. To make up the breach God calls His people to prepare themselves to stand in between Himself and the land. This plan always works. Shall we try it?