

PRIORITIES OF A REVIVAL MINISTRY

The Scriptural objectives of revival are listed in points I thru V. This is the sequential order of priorities in revival.

I. Priority of Cleansing: "INWARD" Aspect of Revival

This is the time of heart-searching and brokenness before God as people deal with sin and self-centeredness to be filled with the fulness of God. (II Chron. 7:14; Ps. 41; Prov. 28:13; I Jn. 1:9)

The time of heart-searching and brokenness before God over sin is implemented by the preaching and individual response for "personal revival." The prayer room and invitation provide opportunities to respond.

II. Priority of Restitution and Fellowship: "SIDEWARD" Aspect of Revival

True cleansing (Point I) is the NECESSARY preparation for believers to make things right with each other and have a new sense of maintaining UNITY in the church. This harmony alone can produce SPIRITUAL fellowship around the living Christ. Carnal believers are incapable of spiritual fellowship and are still prone to gossip, ego-gratification, parading materialistic excellences, and seeking man's approval. (Heb. 10:24; I Jn. 1:3-7)

The importance of being right with each other is implemented by the emphasis on restoration and restitution. Fellowship ministries are experienced through SHARING times in crusade services, prayer meetings, etc.

III. Priority of Prayer and Intercession: "UPWARD" Aspect of Revival

"If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord WILL NOT hear me" (Ps. 66:18). This is the problem of unanswered prayer of pastors and people seeking God for revival as well as the reason so many DO NOT attend prayer meetings in the average church. They know they are not on "praying ground" because of sin, bitterness, resentments, etc.

Do we believe we can ask God to do more in ONE MOMENT OF HIS WORKING from Heaven than we can do in years of faithful efforts? If so, why do we not give PRIORITY to continuous intercession for revival? (Is. 59:1-2)

Prayer ministry is emphasized continually during the crusade. "Revival prayer meetings" are normally held nightly after the services as well as other decided times. One of the marked results of such a revival ministry in many churches has been the renewed interest in personal prayer as well as the establishment of many weekly church prayer meetings.

IV. Priority of Discipleship: "ONWARD" Aspect of Revival

Genuine concern for others as "weak" brothers and a desire for spiritual growth can ONLY proceed from lives filled with divine love. Such a ministry will NOT succeed without the divine motivation of the Holy Spirit in a believer's life. Otherwise man is too self-centered and will drop out at the first occasion of something to his disliking. (Rom. 12:13-15; Gal. 6:1-2; Heb. 10:25; Mat. 28:19-20)

The prayer ministry and testimony times will help prepare many to be actively involved in follow-through ministries. Further discipleship ministries will be suggested according to the various circumstances in each church situation.

V. Priority of Outreach: "OUTGROWTH" Aspect of Revival

Reaching out to the lost will be the natural result of genuine revival. However, attempts at church outreach programs will FAIL when trying to humanly motivate believers who are NOT right with God or with each other. Only daily cleansing and fresh infilling of the Holy Spirit in a believer's life can cause him to have the "Mind of Christ" regarding the unconverted. (Mark 5:19; Lk. 19:10; I Pet. 3:15)

Outreach is the natural response of a heart right with God. Spontaneous witnessing will begin to occur as people meet God. Evangelism training by precept and practice is instituted in longer crusades. Outreach training in witnessing must be emphasized after the crusade in order to mobilize the church as a force for God.

THE REAL PROBLEM - "WE GO AT IT ALL BACKWARDS"

The average church is primarily interested in POINT V (outreach). Both pastors and people are obsessed about outreach FIRST. When attempts to motivate people fail, then POINT IV (follow through) is considered to strengthen some of the "weak" or "fringe" people in the church. If there is not spiritual motivation for outreach, what will produce a desire to minister to others in the church? When it becomes evident that there is no way to motivate carnal self-centered Christians to do this, then POINT III (intercession) is emphasized as the need. "How do we expect God to bless this church if so few come to prayer meeting?" is heard. When it remains this way because so many are NOT on "praying ground," then POINT II (fellowship) is suggested as the real need. "We need to know each other better and have closer fellowship." After some futile attempts, it becomes apparent that true SPIRITUAL fellowship is NOT POSSIBLE among people who do not genuinely love and walk with God.

The LAST THING most Christians are willing to admit is that they and the church need POINT I (cleansing). ISN'T IT STRANGE that we are unwilling to admit and will seek LAST what God places FIRST? We strive for FIRST what God clearly says in HIS ORDER IS LAST as a result of the rest being right. How then can we become "profitable servants" in our witness and outreach to the world?

HOW STRANGE!!!!!!!! ???? ?????

Genuine revival must be the experience of the church before evangelism will become the expression of the church.

THE KEY TRUTH

GENUINE REVIVAL must be the EXPERIENCE of the church before spiritual fellowship, heart-stirring intercession, meaningful burden-bearing and ministering one to another, AS WELL AS soulwinning and evangelism become the continuing EXPRESSION of the church corporately. (II Chron. 7:12-22 (v14); Ps. 51; Ps. 126; Ezek. 36:23; Jn. 13:34-35)

AN IMPORTANT WORD

I believe ANY GROUP of believers can see a genuine moving of God in their midst IF they are COMMITTED TO FOLLOWING GOD'S ORDER. Concentrate on POINT I (Cleansing) until it happens. When it does, begin to concentrate on POINT II (Restoration and Fellowship) as well as the next step, etc., etc. This DOES NOT mean that every church function or every sermon deals with the SAME subject. IT DOES MEAN that the MAIN THRUST of every area of church life should make THIS ITS AIM. It also means NOT TO ANTICIPATE other ministries of the church to produce much SPIRITUALLY on a church level UNTIL believers are right with God and with each other. Though some souls may be saved and certain believers have personal victories, I DO NOT BELIEVE it will be CONSISTENT on a church level until GOD'S PRIORITIES become OURS. Until then we will "spin our wheels" searching out new programs in an effort to "succeed" our OWN WAY.