

I was just thinking about... **Revival**

Bible References:

PS 80:14 Return to us, O God Almighty!

Look down from heaven and see!

Watch over this vine,

PS 80:15 the root your right hand has planted,
the son you have raised up for yourself.

PS 80:16 Your vine is cut down, it is burned with
fire;

at your rebuke your people perish.

PS 80:17 Let your hand rest on the man at your
right hand,

the son of man you have raised up for
yourself.

PS 80:18 Then we will not turn away from you;
revive us, and we will call on your name.

PS 80:19 Restore us, O LORD God Almighty;
make your face shine upon us,
that we may be saved.

PS 85:4 Restore us again, O God our Savior,
and put away your displeasure toward us.

PS 85:5 Will you be angry with us forever?

PS 85:6 Will you not revive us again,
that your people may rejoice in you?

PS 85:7 Show us your unfailing love, O LORD,
and grant us your salvation.

PS 85:8 I will listen to what God the LORD will
say;
he promises peace to his people, his saints--
but let them not return to folly.

PS 85:9 Surely his salvation is near those who fear
him,
that his glory may dwell in our land.

PS 85:10 Love and faithfulness meet together;
righteousness and peace kiss each other.

PS 85:11 Faithfulness springs forth from the earth,
and righteousness looks down from heaven.

PS 85:12 The LORD will indeed give what is
good,
and our land will yield its harvest.

PS 85:13 Righteousness goes before him
and prepares the way for his steps.

A challenge to ponder on what revival actually means...

Revival is not merely the second phase/level in the spirituality of a church. It is not just stepping up to another plane and reaching higher heights in growth. For something to be revived, it must have died, withered or grown complacent and cold. It is an awakening and a restoration of who we are and what our purpose and calling is. It is about a life transformed...from the inside out – on an individual level. This is personal revival. Hold on to what's true, what's essential and what matters most. It's not a new passion or experience but a rekindling of a central truth that reignites a stir of warmth and commitment in our hearts.

Psalm 80:14-19

The True Church of Christ:

- Cause

The church is a body of believers, a group of believers seeking to follow Christ. The cause/purpose is clear and is analogous to a vine and its branches (John 15:1-8). We, the church exist for a cause...that is to share the gospel and to love one another just as Christ loved us. We are always to be reminded that He is the true vine not anything else. He is sufficient and we do not need anything else to enhance the experience/encounter with God. Only through Christ can we approach the throne of grace and enter God's presence (Heb 4:16). Have we been distracted from what matters most? Has our focus been shifted to transient, temporal earthly matters...eg. money, comfort, convenience? Are we seeking to fulfill our calling/cause or are we content with pleasing the church members? Are we faithful to the Word and embracing it with our very lifestyle and church ministries? These are all but fundamental questions...yet if contemplated upon – helps us examine a deadly disease plaguing and rotting the very roots of the modern church.

- Centrality

What matters to us most? An easy question that demands a very honest answer. It doesn't take one to search far for the answer, just a little self-examining. What do we spend most of our time on? Work, education, friends, fun? What matters to the church most? Tending to people's earthly wants rather than spiritual needs? Increasing efficiency and keeping up with the changing times? Or simply opening the doors and taking a step of faith, and going that extra mile to usher people into God's kingdom. The fulcrum of the church is CHRIST. Nothing else. "On Christ the solid rock I stand...all other ground is sinking sand" - the hymnwriter aptly puts it. Our faith is not built on lies but truth, not sinking sand but on solid Rock, not on men but the Man. Through Christ, we are united as a body, as disciples and children of God. He paid the price on the cross. Revival is all about examining yourself and coming to a realization that all that matters is...the cross.

- Consequence

We must realize that we ought to be more than just mediocre Christians. True Christians aren't laid back and complacent. Where are the fruits? What sets us apart from other religions? It is an active relationship with our Saviour! Remember that disobedience leads to punishment, indifference to rebuke and ignorance to judgment. We are to give an account of what Christian lives we have lived. What a reality! Simple yet missed altogether at times: there are two ways to live – by Christ's standards or by the world's. There is no continuum, no spectrum, no grey area...just two paths leading to two very different consequences.

The process: (Ask yourself, what makes you a Christian?)

Repentance → Reconciliation → Revival and Restoration

Prayer: Revive us, and we will call on your name. Restore us, O LORD God Almighty; make your face shine upon us, that we may be saved.

Psalm 85:4-13

- Trust

What do we place our trust upon? Where does our faith lie? When the church goes through tough times – trials, tribulations and temptations...who do we turn to? Who did the disciples turn to when the winds and the storms build up around the boat? We turn to Jesus, back into the hands of our loving Saviour, the author and perfecter of our faith. The world knows little trust – “you can’t trust anybody these days...” a popular thought goes. We as Christians must search deep within our very lives, have we wandered away? If so, let me invite you to return to Christ for restoration and revival. For those who have lost hope or faith, become disillusioned and wearied...come back to the foot of the cross for that’s where it all began – how much trust do you have?

- Obedience

What does trust lead to? The hymns goes: “Trust and obey, for there’s no other way...to be happy in Jesus but to trust and obey”. Jesus gave up everything for us, for our sakes. Unfailing love reached down to provide a way back to the Father. The gift of salvation...what is our response? Gratitude, faithful living, obedience. Live a life of obedience – remember the life Jesus lived – it was in total submission to the will of the Father. A life built upon the Word, upon truths and promises not lies and deceptions. There’s joy in submission, assurance in surrender and faithfulness in commitment. There are many voices around ...who do we listen to?

- A Call to Faithfulness and Fruitfulness

2 Peter says that we have everything we need to live godly lives (i.e. through what Christ has done). It’s not merely a challenge during altar calls or little gentle pokes or nudges every week from the pastor through his long sermons. It’s a reality and it’s a calling. We see throughout the Bible that God demands faithfulness and commitment. Not surface values faithfulness but sincere commitment (Malachi). We are to bear the fruits of the Spirit and live out the Christian life at all costs. Someone once said that the real deal is out on the mission field where you realize that God is all you need when He is all you have. It’s a lifestyle of true worship, serving God by every means possible – through work, family life, serving others and the list goes on and on. The problem with us is that we talk too much, love too seldom and lie too often. The road is long and windy but it has a start and an ending – this is the journey of life... “I am the Vine and you are the branches...if you remain in me, you will bear much fruit”

Revival is a necessity. It’s nothing new. It’s real and it demands a response. But are you ready? Are you prepared to change the way you live?

Church, it’s time to wake up...

In Christ we are a new creation, the old has gone and the new has come.