

Revive Us Again

“Wilt Thou not revive us again: that Thy people may rejoice in Thee?” (Psalm 85:6).

I am the product of genuine revival. In 1968 the Spirit of God moved among the young people in our community for a number of months. During that time several churches were affected, various people were gloriously converted, and some unexpected individuals (me being one of them) were filled with the Spirit and set aside for His service. While this divine intervention was not a widely publicized happening, I'm grateful to have experienced “the '68 Revival.”

Those who have been in the atmosphere of true revival will find themselves hesitant to label just anything “revival.” An emotional prayer meeting, a red-hot testimony time, a few nights of unusual services, several weeks of unusual services, gatherings of great crowds, and responsive altar calls are not always indicators of revival. Yet we must be open to God's purpose, to the way of the Spirit, and prayerfully long for a definite work of God.

The prayer of our text is not the only yearning for revival found in the Scriptures. In another Psalm, hopes were expressed for personal revival. “Though I walk in the midst of trouble, Thou wilt revive me” (Psa. 138:7). Longing for general revival, the prophet prayed, “O LORD, revive Thy work in the midst of the years” (Hab. 3:2). The words before us seem to allude to local and national revival. Notice several key features in this revival emphasis.

Revival issues from the sovereign hand of God! The Psalmist's prayer is properly directed to the Source of revival. “Wilt Thou not revive us again?” God and God alone can conceive it; God and God alone can birth it; and God and God alone can nurture it. While short-lived manifestations of the flesh can be drummed up, stirred up, and propped up by religious personnel, the flame of genuine revival must be ignited and fueled by God the Holy Ghost.

Revival involves the redeemed people of God! The “us” and the “Thy people” of the text must be understood as believers. Without question, sinners are always converted in times of revival. But the basic flow and movement of revival is with God's people. He brings them to the place where they become tired of the status quo of religious procedure, see themselves as a needy people, confess their sins to a holy God and their faults to other Christians.

Revival is for the ultimate glory of God! This is set forth in the phrase, “that Thy people may rejoice in Thee.” There is a unique cycle in all God's operations. That which starts with Him ends with Him! Thus, in revival God graciously stoops to help His people, and His people rise to “rejoice” in Him. While many benefit from these divine invasions, all the praise goes to God! May this be our heart-felt petition, too. “Wilt Thou not revive us again: that Thy people may rejoice in Thee?”