

Requirements for Revival

Many Christians world wide are praying for Spiritual Revival to sweep across our globe. Some are seeing incredible revivals in their areas, such as parts of Africa, South America, Asia and Oceania.

But what does it take to experience revival where you are? First and foremost, Spiritual Revivals are *not* the work of human hands. Despite the advances in technology and media, man made programs *do not* generate nor guarantee Spiritual Revivals. They are the product of the Sovereign Work of God, but it is a Work that is done in response to the devotion of *even one* godly man or woman.

In 1867, an evangelist challenged a young man with the words,

"The world has yet to see what God can do with and for and through and in a man (or woman) who is fully and wholly consecrated to Him."

The young man heard that challenge and thought to himself, "*I want to be that man!*" That young man's name was **Dwight L. Moody** who went on to preach the Gospel to 100 million people, build a Bible Institute and incite spiritual revival across two nations! An examination of Spiritual Revivals past will reveal that they are *always* born in the hearts of consecrated people.

God looks into the hearts of people. He will use any man or woman whose heart is "wholly consecrated to Him". You and I must ask ourselves, '*How important to us is it to be used of God?*', for He will not use wishy washy, double minded, fence sitting or worldly minded Believers. We must choose where we want our lives to count ... either for God or in the world ... the value of which D.L. Moody described as '*dust on a balance*'.

What is God looking for? He is looking for a person who is willing to fulfill His conditions for revival as outlined in 2 Chronicles 7:14.

"and (if) My people who are called by My name
humble themselves and
pray and
seek My face and
turn from their wicked ways,
then I
will hear from heaven,
will forgive their sin and
will heal their land."

- Circle whose 'people' God is speaking to.
- Underline how they are described.
- Circle God's four conditions.
- Underline God's three promises.

The context of 2 Chronicles 7:14 is the dedication of the just completed Temple which Solomon built in Jerusalem in response to God's Word to his father, King David. Solomon offers a prayer on behalf of the nation, beseeching the Almighty to be merciful toward them when, during future times of trials, they pray with a contrite heart toward the City and Temple of His Name. In the quiet of the night, God appears to Solomon and gives him the answer to his prayer. In God's answer is found this verse outlining His conditions for national spiritual healing. He begins ...

(If) *My people who are called by My Name ...

God's conditions for national spiritual revival are limited to *His people*, and *only* to His people. To be specific, the people that are called by God's Name ... the Israelites in the Old Testament and through His Son, the Christians in the New.

If it were up to me, I would have put these conditions on the *nonbelievers*. After all, aren't *they* the ones who need to be revived? But God's ways are not our ways, but *higher* than our ways!

God does not require *every* citizen to respond to His offer, but He does require *His people* to because He has chosen to work *through us!* Why? I do not know, but if we fail, God's healing will not come. So what does He require of us?

'Humble Themselves and Pray'

The four conditions required by God of His people can be grouped into two pairs with the latter condition in each pair dependent on fulfilling the first. In the first pair, most people would have put Prayer as the first condition. But prayer without humility is a wasted activity. Only the genuinely humble person can offer a sincere prayer, for he alone is convinced of his helplessness and God's all powerfulness.

But be sure of this, no one can *make* us humble. They may humiliate us, but that will only result in anger or resentment, not humility. Only *we* can humble ourselves, just as Jesus humbled Himself when He obeyed His Father and willingly gave His life for us (Philippians 2:8). If we are not humble, it is *not* because we *cannot* be, but because we *will not* be.

Pride is what keeps us from humility. Our belief that we can fulfill our *own needs* ... that we can take care of ourselves ... that we don't need help, thank you! But the truth is that we *can't* and that we *do*. And the greater truth is that we are *completely* dependent on God, our Creator and Sustainer, who provides our daily needs, the strength to make it through each day, and every breath we take! We need Him whether we know Him or not, for without God's mercy, each of us would drop dead as surely as a rock hitting the ground. Nothing good happens without His involvement, and until we open our eyes to this truth, we will never pray with the fervency that shakes the throne of the Almighty.

'Seek My Face and Turn From Their Wicked Ways'

God ratchets up the conditions of His offer with the second pair. It is not enough to Humble ourselves nor to Pray. He desires us to Seek His Face. There are at least two instances of people seeing, or asking to see God's face.

One was when Jacob wrestled with God and said, "*I have seen God face to face, yet my life has been preserved.*" The second was when Moses asked to see God's glory and was told, "*You cannot see My face, for no man can see Me and live!*" First, how do you explain the seeming contradiction? Simply, that Jacob saw the face of God filtered through the form of a *theophany*, the physical and visible manifestation of Jesus in the Old Testament, while Moses was asking to see God's face in *all* it's glory. No sinner can survive the *unfiltered* vision of the Holy God and live!

So what is God requiring of us? That we stand before Him person to person, face to face, stripped bare of our superficiality and completely naked to His omniscient gaze, open to His search of our hearts and our minds, and giving Him *absolute freedom* to take, alter or replace anything He deems evil, or dirty, or harmful to us ... *Anything!*

Only when you truly gaze into the eyes of the One who is pure holiness, of the One who loves you supremely just as you are, of the One who was willing to sacrifice His very Son for you, will you be willing to turn from the pleasures that cling to your flesh, that hold you a prisoner in your lusts, that keeps you from being all that God wants you to be. Only then will you be able to break free from the spell that draws you to the forces of darkness and turn towards the pure light of God.

And turn you must! For unless you do, your faith is lacking in conviction. God will not be mocked! He will not be swayed by sweet words, or by expressed emotions or by feigned obedience. His holy pleasure will only come upon those who will take their stand with Him, who will resist the temptations of the dark lord and turn their backs on the empty promises of this world.

This will be possible for those who have humbled themselves before the Almighty, who have covenanted to walk with Him in continuous prayer and who have been captured by His Glorious Being. For them, the rejection of the world's pleasures comes freely for they have seen what has captured the godly men and women of old ... the eternal joy, peace and glory of God's presence!

Don't you desire to be numbered among them? To align your life with the things that really matter and count for eternity? For to them, God makes the following promises:

'Then I Will Hear From Heaven'

Doesn't God always hear? Of course He does, but in Scripture, when God says He hears, He is saying He will answer as well (see 1 John 5:14-15)! Those who will meet His conditions will see their prayers fulfilled! And the reason is simple. The ones meeting God's conditions have so tuned their hearts to His that their every prayer is His Prayer and His Will as well.

'Will Forgive Their Sin'

To hear the words, *'I forgive you'*, from the lips of God is a *salve* to the penitent sinner. It is the promise of a new start, of a new life and of a new relationship with God.

With forgiveness comes renewal and the restoration of our intimacy with our heavenly Father, resulting in our spiritual growth. But God's promise also extends to the physical realm.

'And Heal Their Land'

When God's people fulfill God's conditions, *all* people experience God's blessings. Scripture reveals the relationship between the spiritual world and the physical. Natural catastrophes can be a sign of God's judgment and prosperity an indication of His pleasure.

Is your 'Land' in need of God's healing? Is your community or nation falling away from God's morals? Is the love of pleasure, wealth, or social status replacing the love for neighbors? Are natural catastrophes occurring that destroy the land's productivity and life?

The ultimate solution is in the hands of God's people. They are the key to God's forgiveness and healing that can revive *all* people to a new spiritual awareness and relationship with the Creator.

And it starts with one godly person who will say, **'I want to be that man!'**

Is That Person *You*?