

Our Need For Revival

Lord, I have heard of your fame; I stand in awe of your deeds, Lord.
Repeat them in our day, in our time make them nown;
in wrath remember mercy.

Habakkuk 3:2 (NIV)

One of the sad realities in the Christian Church today is the tragic lack of understanding of our real spiritual condition. I am disappointed to read advertising by many churches and Christian Conference Centres about the remarkable ministries they have and how abundantly the people are blessed who attend their gatherings.

It seems that modesty—or humility—is not one of the spiritual gifts many churches have in the 21st century. It is sad because what boasting indicates to those who listen carefully is that the braggart is immature.

I have used the story before about a little girl coming into the party room and asking everyone to see how beautiful she is and how pretty her dress is. We certainly would assure her that she looks spectacular and praise her. However, if her mother came in and did the same thing, we would feel awkward about praising her. Adults know better than to praise themselves.

When we look at revival in biblical times, remarkable things occurred when the Holy Spirit's empowered the church.

Hundreds—and sometimes thousands—of people were converted after hearing only one sermon (Acts 2:41). Occasionally the people were under such conviction of sin that they interrupted the preacher to ask how they might be saved from the judgment to come (Acts 2:37).

Looking at the history of the Christian Church, we read of preachers announcing they would be in a certain farmer's field in 3 hours to preach, and thousands of people would show up for the sermon that would typically last 1-2 hours.

During these great movements of the Holy Spirit saloons would have to close down for lack of customers. Jail keepers would have to find other employment because the crime rate in their town was reduced to almost zero as a result of the revival.

The tremendous social reform in England following the Great Awakening in the 1750's kept the country from falling into anarchy the way France did.

The writer of today's verse, Habakkuk, longed to witness God moving powerfully in society as He had done in previous gen-

erations. Habakkuk listened to his elders relate what they too had heard of great times of blessing from the Lord and how the hearts of the people had been turned to righteousness from evil.

As we read of corruption in politics and business—and also the evil available through the printed page and the internet—we ought to recognize the need for the Lord to come and rain righteousness on our land.

Let us read our Bibles and the powerful movements of the Holy Spirit recorded in its pages, and let us read the history of the church to see the great times of spiritual revival recorded for our benefit. Then let us commence praying as Habakkuk did concerning *our need for revival*.

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