



REVIVAL

Definition

Dynamics and

Demise of Spiritual Awakenings

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FOREWORD

The material in this booklet was first written as a term paper for Fuller Theological Seminary and was presented as part of a research program to determine suitable methods for training missionaries. It has since been adapted for wider usage.

Four key questions formed the basis of the research:

1. What are the common characteristics of revival as it has occurred within different cultures?
2. Have there been common social factors which have helped to prepare people for revival in the past?
3. In regard to the people who God has used to stimulate revival, what has been their emphasis in ministry and methodology?
4. What factors have caused the power of revivals to wane in the past?

The historical scope of the study covers the period from the Pietists until today.

The booklet presents an overview of some of the dynamics of revival and identifies issues which are important for Pastors and others who desire to see God work in the Church for His glory.

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CHAPTER 1

REVIVAL – WHAT IS IT?

What is revival? Confusion exists within Churches today regarding the use of the words “revival” and “renewal”.

In Australia, the two expressions “revival”, and “evangelical awakening” are generally understood to mean the same thing. The word “renewal”, however, has many different meanings and may be applied to any one of the following concepts:

1. A personal experience of God which has brought the believer into a closer walk with God.
2. A participation in a movement where there is the rediscovery of the charismata.
3. The outcome of a carefully planned strategy to bring about change in the Church, particularly to its structures.
4. The desired goal for every Christian’s life.
5. Revival, though the word is rarely used in this way.

Lovelace, an American Church history professor, includes the meaning of revival in his use of the word “renewal”, and as this book presents some of his ideas, it will use the three expressions “renewal”, “revival”, and “evangelical awakening” interchangeably.

Definition of Revival

Dr Martin Lloyd-Jones offers the following definition of revival.

“Revival is an outpouring of the Spirit of God. It is a kind of repetition of Pentecost. It is the Spirit descending upon people. This needs to be emphasized in this present age. For we have been told so much recently by some that every man at regeneration receives the baptism of the Spirit, and all he has to do after that is to surrender to what he has already. But revival does not come as the result of a man surrendering to what he already has; it is the Spirit being poured out upon him, descending upon him, as happened on the day of

Pentecost". (1987:289)

Lovelace also emphasises that revival comes down from God and cannot be merely the product of man's own activities.

Spiritual life is produced by the presence and empowering of the Holy Spirit, not simply by the comprehension of doctrinal propositions or strategies of renewal. (1979:79)

Is revival something which impacts the Church alone? Or does it impact the Church and the unbelieving world together? Orr's definition makes it clear that God may choose to send revival at any point on the continuum – from the individual to a nation or group of nations.

"revival comes down from God and cannot be merely the product of man's own activities"

An Evangelical Awakening is a movement of the Holy Spirit bringing about a revival of New Testament Christianity in the Church of Christ and in its related community. Such an awakening may change in a significant way an individual only; or it may affect a larger group of believers; or it may move a congregation, or the Churches of a city or district, or the whole body of believers throughout a country or continent; or indeed the larger body of believers throughout the world. The outpouring of the Spirit effects the reviving of the Church, the awakening of the masses, and the movement of uninstructed peoples towards the Christian faith; the revived Church, by many or by few, is moved to engage in evangelism, in teaching, and in social action. (1976: vii)

Martin Lloyd-Jones believes that revival is for the Church because only the Church has life. As the Church comes alive the witness of Christians and the preaching of pastors becomes powerful, resulting in people from outside the Church being brought into the Kingdom. (1987:1, 2)

Characteristics of Revival

The events which occurred on the Day of Pentecost were typical of the characteristics of revival as they are seen particularly in the First and Second Awakenings. Lovelace believes that some "revivals" subsequent to the Second Awakening have had neither the same spiritual or theological depth, nor the breadth of social or cultural consequences. (1979:49)

The major marks of an Evangelical Awakening are always some repetition

of the phenomena of the Acts of the Apostles, followed by the revitalizing of nominal Christians and by bringing outsiders into vital touch with the Divine Dynamic causing all such awakenings – the Spirit of God. (Orr, 1976: vii)

Edwin Orr, acknowledged world authority on the history and dynamics of spiritual awakening, lists eight components present on the Day of Pentecost which may be traced through many subsequent revivals.

1. The blessing was predicted and soon fulfilled (Acts 1:8).
2. Extraordinary praying (Upper room).
3. People were filled with the Spirit. The sound of rushing wind followed by xenolalic evangelism not repeated by the Apostles or authenticated since.
4. Preaching with power – accompanied by prophesying, dreams and visions.

“In whatever country or branch of Protestantism it appeared, the awakening had distinctive features. It was characteristically Protestant and stressed the authority of the Scriptures, salvation by faith alone, and the priesthood of all believers. It made much of the personal religious experience of the new birth through trust in Christ, commitment to Him, and faith in what God had done through Him in the incarnation, the cross and the resurrection.”

5. Mighty conviction when people were “drummed to the earth”.
6. Public confession of faith (in baptism).
7. Apostolic teaching, fellowship, communion, and prayers.
8. No hostile power was able to hinder them. (1976:viii)

What men wake up to in the light of a revival is their own condition and the nature of the true God. (Lovelace 1979:82)

Martin Lloyd-Jones provides a vivid description of what may occur during revival.

“It is an experience in the life of the Church when the Holy Spirit does an unusual work. He does that work, primarily, amongst the believers of the Church; it is a reviving of believers.....Suddenly the power of the Spirit comes upon them and they are brought into a new and more profound awareness of the truths that they had previously held intellectually, and perhaps at a deeper level too. They are humbled, they are convicted of sin, they are terrified at themselves. Many of them feel that they have never been Christians. And then they come to see the great salvation of God in all its glory and to feel its power. Then, as a result of their quickening and enlivening, they begin to pray. New power comes into the preaching of the ministers, and the result is that large numbers ... are converted. So the two main characteristics of revival are first, this extraordinary enlivening of the members ... and second, the conversion of masses of people” (1987:1, 2).

Wherever revival has appeared it has borne most of the characteristics mentioned by Orr as well as a small number of local distinctives. Latourette provides a helpful summary statement:

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The Social Consequences of Revival

Perhaps the major consequence is the extension of the Kingdom of God through a display of God's power. However, the impact of revivals in the world has produced several other significant social changes which often go unnoticed.

- A. Transformation of society. Christians whose lives have been transformed by God have often had a great desire to work for the transformation of their societies.

“The awakening gave rise to efforts to relieve suffering and to remedy collective evils. Many of those touched by it, while believing that it was not in accord with the Scriptures to work and hope for the transformation of society as a whole, were active in promoting such institutions as orphanages, and hospitals and in such enterprises as nursing the sick and relieving famine” (Latourette, 1975:1019).

- B. Protection for the defenceless. In addition to working to help the orphans and the sick, Christians from the revivals began to champion the cause of those who had been placed in positions of helplessness.

“The first social impact of the awakening of the nineteenth century was felt in the emancipation of the slaves, in the protection of prisoners, in the care of the sick and wounded, in the betterment of the standards of workers, in the defence of women and children and of helpless animals” (Orr, 1965:82.)

- C. Great missionary expansion. The revivals gave Christians a tender conscience in relation to their own society, and an additional dimension of compassion soon emerged as men and women recognised and responded to the needs of Christless people from other cultures. Orr tells the story of the remarkable Scudder family who initiated Christian medical work in Madras, India and built the great Vellore Medical College and Hospital. (Orr, 1971:220) Other giants went forth – men like Carey and Livingstone – having first been touched by revival in their homeland.

Summary – Seven Important Points

1. The phenomena of the Day of Pentecost is typical of true revivals.
2. Revival comes as a result of an outpouring of the Holy Spirit. Spiritual life produced by the presence and empowering of the Holy Spirit.
3. The focus of revival is the Church. In revival, God brings the Church back to life.
4. As a result of revival in the Church, Christians discover a new dimension of reality in their walk with God.
5. As the Church is bought back to life and power, it has an extraordinary impact upon the world through its prayers, preaching and witness.
6. A revived Church has a social impact upon the society of which it is a part. As a result, the society is transformed. The helpless and the oppressed are liberated and acts of mercy abound.
7. A revived Church is empowered to reach across the world in significant missionary and philanthropic endeavours.

CHAPTER 2

REVIVAL – WHAT CAN I DO?

God has used a wide variety of factors in the preparation of a Church or a people for a Heaven sent revival. These factors can be gathered in general groupings and in a sequence in which they have frequently occurred. It should be noted at the outset, however, that in reality, times and events often overlap and God cannot be confined to any human system of understanding.

Factors which may lead to Revival

i. A sense of crisis.

God often shakes and tests His creation by means of crisis. There is no limit to the variety of crises which God may allow. Most crises used by God to prepare the Church for revival have been evidently of man's own making.

Wallis, writing of England prior to the great revival in the eighteenth century, indicates a clear linkage between the serious decline which occurred in the Church and the resultant erosion of standards within society.

It was a time of increased intellectual activity and expression. The freedom of worship secured through the Reformation had degenerated into licence to defy all authority, human and divine. Hobbs and Locke made infidelity popular. Gibbon and Hume devoted their time to discrediting the Church..... The Church seemed helpless.... The Sabbath was a day of general carousal. Public blasphemy was common. Current literature and common conversation was lascivious and corrupt. God was openly defiled. (1967:205)

Edwin Orr also writes that the Church's failure to influence and reach those in the academic world resulted in a later crisis in Church and society.

Why did it occur at the time it did?

The way of God are past finding out. One can only surmise. A

subtler form of infidelity had arisen, a compromise between Christianity and humanism. A more sophisticated interpretation of human conduct, inspired by Freud, spoke of God as an Illusion.

The prescient wisdom of its Author may also account for the sudden spread of the Revival of 1900 – 1910. Within ten years the awful slaughter of World War 1 had begun, and a gentler way of life passed into the twilight of history. (1976:97)

Orr's last sentence is a reminder that even when a crisis is man-made, God may use it as a catalyst to produce something better because of His love.

Writing of the events which led to the outbreak of revival in Timor, Dr George Peters (Professor of World Missions at Dallas Theological Seminary) identifies crisis after crisis. First there was widespread famine. The people, long dependent on nature for the production of food crops experienced feelings of failure. They wondered whether they were under judgment and feared the future. There was a general sense of religious bankruptcy. Then followed the abortive coup and all of its attendant horrors when the communists grasped for, and lost, power. As a consequence of the coup the Government required all peoples to identify with a religion acknowledging one God. Whilst this requirement had some disadvantages for the Church it has proved to be a direct catalyst to a significant ingathering of people into the Church. (1974:53-56)

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Koch, a contemporary German writer, also identifies the role played in Indonesia by the crisis of famine and the shock attempted coup. He links a third crisis area not identified by Peters – a crisis caused by rampant nominality in the Church.

Numerically the greatest effect of the revival has been felt among the nominal Christians in the dead and traditional orthodox Churches. Before revival came to the area these Christians were characterised by the way in which they still clung to their former heather occult practices. (Koch: 283)

Nominality was also a key factor in the events leading up to the Cambuslang revival in Scotland. Other factors, as identified by Glasgow University scholar, Fawcett, was crises caused through nature such as famine, violent storms and severe cold, and crises caused by lawlessness within the community evidenced by drunkenness, violence and immorality.

(2971:27-127)

Just prior to the outbreak of the Asbury revival in the United States, there was a crisis due to lawlessness and fear. Some members of the community, like Koch, felt that their society was descending into chaos.

We are living close to the end of the age. The chaos is growing and manifesting itself more every day. Law and order is crumbling before the onslaught of the powers of darkness. (Koch: 290)

Thousands of Christians in America have been horrified by the hopeless moral, political and spiritual depths to which their country has sunk over the last few decades.

The rejection of the standards of the previous generation by the young people of the present generation indicated spiritual and social crisis. The inroad of materialism into a culture can be devastating.

“For the younger generation, in particular, life was becoming more complex and sophisticated. The possession of “things” loomed larger, and some, drawn by the magnet of materialism, craved education as the key to jobs and leadership. Few were ready and willing to take on responsibility in the South Sea Evangelical Church”(Griffiths, 1977:169.)

Orr refers to economic crises; Lovelace refers to the horrors of war. Wallis provides a succinct summary statement.

“It is strange but true that the prevalence of lawlessness in the world and of deadness in the Church is often an indication of impending revival” (1967:204.)

ii. The Intercessory Stage

The sense of crisis has often, though not always, led to a second stage which Orr has called the intercessory stage.

Historians have often dismissed the Awakening of 1858 as the “bank-panic revival” ignoring the fact that both the intercessory and evangelistic phases of the movement had begun before or independent of the bank panic of 1857. The great movement has been traced to prayer meetings begun in Manhattan in September of 1857, which became newsworthy in March 1858. Bank panics do not automatically produce religious awakenings,

as noted in the crash of 1929 crash. (Orr 1971:53)

Sometimes there has been a need for other intermediate stages to occur between the crisis and the intercession. In the great centuries of Awakening, the news of a new outpouring of the Spirit in another place was enough to motivate hearts towards prayer. Prior to the Second Great Awakening during a period of serious decline in the Churches, many Evangelicals remembered the previous advances of the Gospel and began to pray with increased urgency. (Lovelace 1979:46) Sometimes the beginnings of prayer efforts have been linked with leaders coming under conviction about their personal ineffectiveness, especially in the light of the success of others.

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“The pastor from Balfour was troubled by his lack of success. He was told that societies for prayer lay behind any good achieved at Nigg. He then set up three distinct societies in Golspie, which met each Saturday evening. After a year of earnest intercession, “upward of seventy persons” had been awakened and consulted the minister” (Fawcett, 1971:137.)

In Timor, there were four inter-linked but separate phases in the lead up to the revival. The first phase was a healing campaign which stirred the Church and produced a hunger for greater manifestations of spiritual power in their midst. During the second phase God gave visions to individuals which resulted in the Church moving forward in obedience and prayer. In the third phase Pastor Manuain preached strong Bible centred evangelistic messages which focused on Christ, Repentance and faith. This ministry supplemented the ministry of the first phase which apparently lacked a strong Biblical base. The final phase was a period of

strong deeper life Bible teaching which helped prepare the people for the revival through an emphasis on openness, transparency and honesty. Significantly, the preacher had been involved in the East African revival. (1974:19, 20)

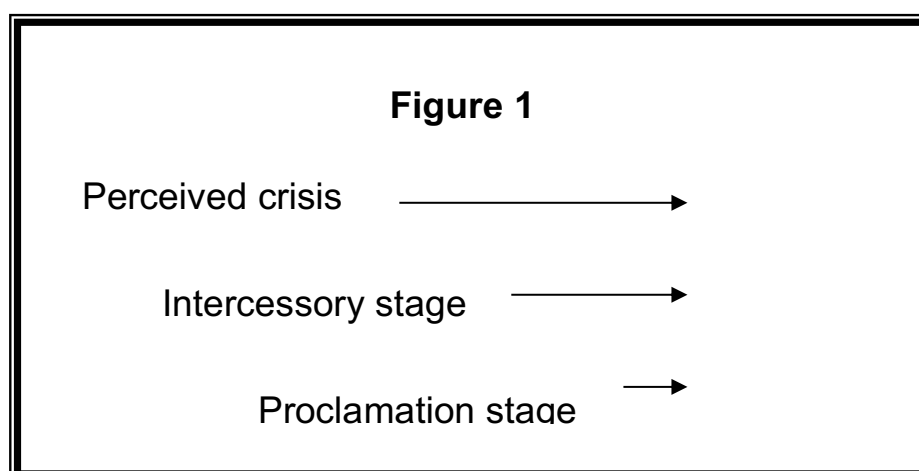
The pattern outlined above has not been repeated in detail elsewhere, but, as Wallis concludes, the essential ingredients of the process appear in most instances.

In times preceding revival it is common to find among believers of various persuasions a fresh emphasis on the work of the Holy Spirit. (1967:69)

So then, the sense of crisis leads sensitive Christians to a ministry of intercession which, in different cultures and ages, has taken many different forms – ranging from individual's prayer times to mighty prayer movements. God has answered the prayers of individuals, small groups, Church congregations, and national prayer movements. The kind of prayer and the amount of prayer both seem to be relevant with regards to the extent of the ensuing revival. Prayer needs to be urgent, believing, earnest, and expressive of the peoples' desire to see God glorified in order to achieve God's positive response. Another interesting factor is that there seems to be a relationship between the number and geographical location of those praying and the spread of the revival.

(iii) **The proclamation Stage.**

The second intercessory stage leads to the third stage – proclamation. During the stage of proclamation, stages one and two are still present. That is, the perceived crisis is ongoing and the intercessory prayer is building in intensity and extent.



The three stages continue simultaneously until they are met by the outpouring of God's Holy Spirit, resulting in the conviction and the transformation of human lives.

Both Lloyd –Jones and Lovelace believe that the proclamation must be of a special nature.

The beginning place for personal renewal in most congregations is a preaching and teaching ministry which emphasises primary elements of spiritual dynamics: depth proclamation of the Gospel. (Lovelace 1979:210)

Lovelace outlines the essential elements of sound doctrine which should be proclaimed in the preparatory and early stages of revival. See figure 2 on page 17.

Lovelace has accurately summarised the necessary doctrinal emphases to bring the Church to what Lloyd-Jones describes as "live orthodoxy." It is important to now look at the subject of the content of preaching.

Summary – Three General Stages leading to Revival

1. The perception of a crisis situation which existed in both the community and Church. Many of these crises were man-made. A major cause of crisis is nominality in the Church. Failure to win the academic world to Christ was seen as a cause for later demise in both Church and society.
2. The intercessory stage. The number of catalysts to effective prayer were identified – among them the crisis itself, the ineffectiveness of the Church, the memory of how God has worked previously, and the challenge of what God was doing in revival elsewhere.
3. The proclamation stage. The substance of the proclamation was seen to be important during both the preliminary of the Gospel phase and the Depth presentation phase. The content of the Gospel is listed in figure 2.

Methods which may Foster Revival

The timing of any outpouring of the Spirit lies with God, but somewhere in the process He prepares a human heart agent for his use. Roberts, Harris, Whitefield, and Finney were all greatly used by God, along with

hundreds of others. A simple story emerging from Timor's revival illustrates the need for obedience as an essential quality found in those whom God has used in the initiating stages of revival. Peters tells of a gifted high school principal who was loved and respected by all. She felt that the Lord had called her to give up her honoured position and enter Bible College in order to learn to serve Him better. She struggled with the call, eventually submitting to God and challenging her students to follow the Lord wholeheartedly. Such was their respect for her that many of them agreed and formed a youth fellowship for the purpose of doing evangelistic work. The revival which had passed through four preparatory phases began in full force as a result of the principal's obedience. (Peters 1974:25, 26)

Koch, commenting about the life and ministry of Dr John Sung said that everything about this unprepossessing man was energy and power. His preaching was the expression of his own private study of the Bible. A great power radiated from him. (Koch: 55-61)

In our endless search for more effective methods, we must never forget that God is primarily looking for more effective people. God met Howell Harris of Wales in a communion service and changed his life. Over a period of time several "God encounters" so marked Harris as a holy man of power that God was able to use him as an agent for revival for the rest of his life.

The primary factor then in the fostering of revival is the human agent or agents. Intercessory prayer for revival should include petitions for God to raise up His agents who will serve Him. My personal observation of revival is that it is usually caught not taught. Revival spreads through revived lives in most cases.

Many men and women of God have offered themselves to God to serve as agents of revival but few have been used by God. Revival is not a mechanical exercise from man's side. It also requires God to pour out His Spirit. God is the initiator of revival.

"How else can we account for the intensity of conviction of sin?

How can the intense conviction of sin which occurs in all evangelical awakenings be explained?.... All that can be said is that an unknown force has simultaneously set to work upon everyone's conscience.

The conviction of conscience appears to work upon all matters, great and small" (Orr 1971:219.)

Figure 2

1. Preconditions of Renewal: Preparation for the Gospel

- A. Awareness of the holiness of God - His justice and His love
- B. Awareness of the depth of sin in your own life and
your community

2. Primary Elements of Renewal: Depth Presentation of the Gospel

A. Justification:

You are accepted

B. Sanctification:

You are free from bondage to sin in Christ

C. The Indwelling Spirit:

You are not alone

D. Authority in Spiritual Conflict:

You have Authority

(Lovelace: 1979:75)

God's invention does not always ensure man's recognition that He has been at work.

Some students from the very beginning refuse to admit the

possibility of anything real in the services. Others thought that the movement was the event of their lives. (Orr 1971:210)

Lovelace comments that there have usually been opponents to revival.

Two charges recur in the same form in almost every context, however: revivalism is said to be divisive, and it is accused of fanaticism or “enthusiasm.” (1979:240)

History affirms that there have been people who have fallen into the error of failing to balance the leading of the Holy Spirit with the teaching of Scripture, but it is inappropriate to reject the whole of what God is doing because of the failure of a few. Opposition to revival does not normally stop it. Opposition places the opponents outside of the realm in which God is presently blessing.

Common Patterns and Methods used to foster Revivals

The 1859 Awakening generally took two forms – the reviving of Christians, and the converting of outsiders. In both forms one may trace several stages of development:

1. The emergence of a stimulating incident,
2. The striving for an outlet for feeling,
3. The orientation of the experience, and
4. The release of tension in movement. (Orr 1949:247)

Revival is focused initially on the Church which, having been refined and empowered can make an impact on the surrounding society. Orr believes that the four stages occur in both the Church and the society during the full course of revival. See figure 3 on following page.

Within this general framework God has used His agents.

He has also taught His servants some valuable lessons about the methods which He has honoured. Some methods have been used in only one or two instances but there have been others identified below, which have a broad application.

Proclamation of the Word. It is essential that the Word be preached. There has been some discussion as to whether the Word has been a significant factor in some revivals. Complaints were voiced during the Welsh revival that there was not enough preaching and teaching of the Word, but observers on the spot replied that the Welsh people had heard the Word over and over again, and that the great need was to

obey what they knew. (Orr 1971:217)

Figure 3

Revival in the Church

Stage 1. Stimulation comes from hearing about revival elsewhere.

Stage 2. The information quickens the prayer life of the Church.

Stage 3. Prayer is directed towards reviving Churches and saving the lost.

Stage 4. Evangelism and love are directed towards helping the poor and needy.

Conversion of Outsiders

Stage 1. Prostration or lesser signs of conviction.

Stage 2. People flocking to evangelistic services.

Stage 3. Prayer is directed towards reviving Churches and saving the lost.

Stage 4. Evangelism and love are directed towards helping the poor and needy.

(Orr, 1949, 248)

It is important that certain doctrines of the Word be given prominence.

While Evangelical Churches have been preaching incessantly on the love of God since the Moody era, in far too many instances the justifying work of Christ has not been spelled out clearly and blamed by an equal stress on sanctification... (Lovelace 1979:211)

It is important to teach about justification, sanctification, the indwelling Holy Spirit, and spiritual conflict. These four doctrines recur in all of the teaching of the great revivals since the Puritans. Lovelace points out that there was also an emphasis placed on the fellowship of believers, the ministry of the laity, and the need for protestant foreign missions. (1979:45)

During revival there always comes a new emphasis on the blood of Christ. People think once more of the power of the blood, and of protection by the blood.

Doctrines in themselves will be of little assistance. People need the truth and the life. Either one by itself is inadequate. Wallis comments on the preaching by the revivalists.

“It was anointed preaching. Peter was “filled with the Spirit”; there was the explanation of his power.

It was fearless preaching. Whitefield said of Griffith Jones, a Welsh evangelist of his day, that his preaching possessed a grasp on the conscience. Such a ministry requires a proclamation of the holiness of God and the sinfulness of sin.

It was Christ-centred preaching” (1967:84-87.)

The word of God was proclaimed with great power and authority.

Discipleship Groups were often formed with a view to nurturing new converts in the Word and in faith. The purpose of the groups was personal spiritual growth. The context of this discipling ministry was usually a decadent society and a nominal Church. The small cell groups functioned as lights in a dark world until Churches came alive as a result of the revival. Unfortunately, cell groups remained necessary for those who belonged to Churches who would not participate in the revival.

The ministry of teams has been important in fostering and spreading revival. Revival is more easily caught than taught. The presence in a

meeting of someone who has experienced revival has often been a catalyst to the further spread of the movement. Alison Griffiths writes of teams of men who went out in ministry together. She says “As they went, the outpouring and power of the Holy Spirit went with them.” (1977:177)

In the beginning of the revival on Timor, David Simeon led a team from the Bible School in East Java.

“The team’s message was one of repentance and rebirth, and of sanctification through the Holy Spirit” (Koch: 124.)

Ministry in revival requires gifting and experience of God working in supernatural ways. For this reason, if for no other, it is advantageous for ministry to be done on a team basis. Peters, writing from a conservative

“The team’s message was one of repentance and rebirth, and of sanctification through the Holy Spirit”

standpoint describes the supernatural element which he discovered in the revival in Timor. He feels that these are characteristics of most non-western revivals.

(There were)...comas and rapturous experiences, visions, trances, dreams, emotional frenzies, overwhelming joy and peace; public confession of sins and restitutions of wrongs; reconciliations and forgiveness of old and deep feuds between villages. There was healing, resuscitations, exorcism of demons and the restoration of demon possessed persons. Signs and wonders were reported everywhere. Healers, exorcists, prophets, and prophetesses appeared in most revivals and were not hesitant to make themselves known to the people.

There was also revival in prayer, Bible reading, Church attendance, joy and boldness in witnessing and readiness to sacrifice and to suffer for Christ. Obedience to those in authority and faithfulness in daily duties were reported and acknowledged by friend and foe alike. Church growth was reported after every revival. (1974:49)

There is no reason to doubt that Peters’ assessment is true. Therefore, any Christian workers who are called to minister in a revival situation within a non-western context need to have theological and practical skills which enable them to minister effectively. My conviction is the Peters’ statement would be applied to western cultures as well, especially to the realm of the miraculous.

All of the above presupposes that one knows how to pray effectively.

Intercessory prayer is one of the preparatory steps to revival and it is also one of the vital factors in its spread and continuance.

Summary – Nine Statements about Fostering Revival

1. The primary concern of God is with the human agent whom He has chosen to use. Intercessory prayer should include petitions for God to raise up new agents.
2. Revival results from the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. It “comes down.” It cannot be “worked up.”
3. There are various stages in the development of revival. Understanding this helps people to know how to pray.
4. The proclamation of the Word of God is a major key to the fostering of revival.
5. There are certain doctrines which should be emphasised to ensure balance and life.
6. Truth without life is relatively ineffective. The Word must be preached with power and authority.
7. Cell groups to nurture new converts are important.
8. The revival may be best communicated through ministry teams which are made up of people with complimentary gifts.
9. Because revival is God’s work it is supernatural. Those who would lead it require suitable experience and giftedness.

Revival and the Sovereignty of God

Can we have revival whenever we want one?

American Revivalist Charles Finney says that revival was the result of the appropriate use of means. A review of his ministry seems to indicate that he was a true and effective revivalist in the best sense. But others who have endeavoured to follow his methodology appear only to have bought disrepute upon themselves. Lloyd-Jones blames Finney for the introduction of the idea that a revival is equivalent to an evangelistic crusade. This comparison leads to a loss of prayerful anticipation of blessings of true revival.

Neither the 1972 Awakening, at Finney’s birth, nor the 1830 movement, nor the 1858-0 Awakening, nor the 1905 Revival after

his death, was planned, programmed, or promoted. It must be concluded that Finney's theory applied to evangelism, not outpourings of the Spirit. (Orr 1976:23)

Revival is given as a sovereign act of God, but there are some situations in which it appears that God allows people to resist His blessing.

How spiritual preparedness, or the absence of it, may influence God's working is vividly illustrated by the visit of the Saviour to Nazareth. He could there do no mighty work.... And He marvelled because of their unbelief. (Mark6:5, 6) (Wallis 1967:61)

Why, then, do revivals die?

CHAPTER 3

OH NO! WE'VE LOST IT!

If God's sovereignty is involved in the bestowal of the gift of revival, then it must also be involved in the circumstances surrounding the decline of any movement of revival. Nevertheless possible to identify certain factors which have contributed towards the decline of revivals.

1. Cycles in Human History.

Edwards advanced the theory that cycles of decline and awakening recur in history. Lovelace attributes decline in a general sense to the "gravity of human sin" Each succeeding generation moves another step away from God. The Book of Judges records such cycles which were often interrupted by some kind of national crisis and the emergence of a new leader.

Decline within the Church in the period from 1920 to 1930 was noted by Orr.

A generation was growing up which did not know that in times of spiritual decline – to engage in intercession as did the Churches in the late eighteenth century. Even among those most evangelistically inclined the Finneyan notion that revival is nothing more than the right use of appropriate means left the zealots seeking techniques and gimmicks rather than spiritual power. Too much energy was spent in polemics against the Modernist establishment and not enough for prayer for an awakening. (1976:130)

Unfortunately, it is possible for the life in the Church to degenerate even further. The two excerpts from Lovelace which follow highlight two conditions that can seriously inhibit the work of the Holy Spirit: (1) a form of nominality which also for rampant materialism and (2) a lack of love for those within or without the Church.

The dynamic of prayerful concern for God's Kingdom which had characterised the earlier evangelicals was replaced by religious forms and legalistic moralism camouflaging the laity's ultimate concern for the feathering of their own nests rather than for the enjoyment of God and the advancement of His glory. (1979:50)

Figure 4

Satan's Strategies which cause Decline in Revivals

1. Attack directly with despair or discouragement.
2. Plant lies, caricatures, and stereotypes in the minds of unbelievers or unrevived Christians so that they will reject the work of God and.
3. Set the leaders against each other and so divide and conquer.
4. Get converts to go to extremes and so discredit the movement.
5. Produce counterfeit miracles to discredit the real ones.

Dissension and division within the congregation can short-circuit the work of God there, grieving the Holy Spirit and extinguishing His power. But it is also true that an absence of concern and charity for other parts of the body of Christ on a larger scale can diminish the fullness of Christ within a Church or denomination. This is one reason why many orthodox groups with a strong concern for doctrinal purity operate in an atmosphere of sterility and spiritual deadness. (1979:227)

2. Opposition from Satan

The Book of Acts serves as a reminder that any advance of the Kingdom of God is met with a direct counter-attack from the devil.

A significant revival occurred in the 1970's

“any advance of the Kingdom of God is met with a direct counter-attack from the devil.”

in the Sepik district of Papua New Guinea. After showing much initial promise it waned. Griffiths indicates why this happened.

“Then came a vicious counter-attack. In one Church in particular, the power of evil gained an entrance, and there were serious excesses.....Three discouraging years went by, and the Christians felt despondent and powerless against the cults and darkness of sin” (1977:200.)

Jonathan Edwards, according to Lovelace, held the theory that the invisible armies of light and darkness were constantly involved in warfare behind the scenes. He warned that Christians should be on the alert constantly against attacks from the devil. (Lovelace 1979:256)

Lovelace has provided a helpful summary of Satan’s strategies concerning revivals. It has five component parts. See Figure 4.

3. Lack of True Christlike Behaviour

Edwards believed that the greatest single cause of the miscarriage of revivals was pride. It is an insidious trap because it snares those who are most zealous to promote the revival. (Lovelace 1979:245)

This proud attitude appears to be reflected in a statement made by a visitor to Uganda following the revival in that country.

A Japanese Christian, Professor Shimizu, once said to me, “I found that the attitude of the Christians out there was a little repugnant. They didn’t seem to be ready to accept anything from another brother, although they expected other Christians to listen to them.”

When the leading Christians lose their humility, a revival rapidly goes downhill. (Koch: 191)

4. Failure to Comply with Biblical Patterns of Life and Witness

Lovelace is concerned that the blessings received in revival should result in changes within the Church and in the Church’s witness to lost people.

Reformation grows out of

“Revival declines wherever the flow of life within it is inhibited, whether by forces within or without the Church.”

awakened spiritual interest, and spiritual renewal seldom persists long without continuing reformation. This suggests that God has chosen to bless His Church with the fullness of the Holy Spirit on the condition of its moving towards certain vital norms of health and witness. (1979:52)

In Lovelace's view, conformity with Biblical norms involves emphasizing the ministry that lay people have, building vital cell groups which are able to pray intelligently for the extension of the renewal through the Church and into the community, and the building of essential community interfaces at every level. (1979:224, 225)

Revival declines wherever the flow of life within it is inhibited, whether by forces within or without the Church.

Summary

Some of the factors which may cause the decline of a revival are:-

1. Cycles of decline and awakening in history.
2. Opposition from the devil.
3. Lack of true Christlike behaviour.
4. Failure to conform with Biblical patterns of life and witness.

CHAPTER 4

NOW FOR SOME ACTION!

There are some significant implications for those who are training Christian leaders for either a local Church ministry or a cross-cultural ministry.

What are the implications which are considered to be essential?

1. The Nature and Purpose of Revival

Revival occurs when God pours out His Holy Spirit upon the Church in a similar way to the Day of Pentecost. It may have an impact on an individual alone, or it can change the whole world. Revival has its source in God, not in man. God's purpose in sending revival is to empower the Church to significantly impact on its surrounding community through the Gospel.

The following points are both expansive and relevant.

- (a) Whilst three terms have been used interchangeably throughout this book, trainees from the South-west Pacific region will not need to make a distinction between "revival" and "evangelical awakening", which are synonymous, and "renewal" which is generally associated with the Charismatic Renewal movement.
- (b) The phenomena of the Day of Pentecost is typical of true revivals.
- (c) Revival comes as a result of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. Spiritual life is produced by the presence and empowering of the Holy Spirit.
- (d) The focus of revival is the Church. In revival God brings the Church back to life.
- (e) As a result of revival in the Church, Christians discover a new dimension of reality in their walk with God.
- (f) As the Church is brought back to life and power, it has an extraordinary impact upon the world through its prayer, preaching and witness.
- (g) A revived Church is empowered to reach across the world in

significant missionary and philanthropic endeavours.

2. A Biblical Model of Cyclical and Continuous Revival

3.

Careful note should be taken of Lovelace's model which provides a theological framework for a ministry designed to foster continuous renewal. See figure 5. (1979:75)

Figure 5

I. Preconditions of Renewal: Preparation for the Gospel

- A. Awareness of the holiness of God - His Love and Justice
 - Awareness of the depth of sin - in your own life
in you community
-

II. Primary Elements of Renewal: Depth Presentation of the Gospel

- A. Justification: You are accepted
- B. Sanctification: You are free from bondage to sin
- C. The indwelling Spirit: You are not alone - in Christ
- D. Authority in spiritual conflict: You have authority

III. Secondary Elements of Renewal: Outworking of the Gospel in the Church's Life

- A. Mission: following Christ into the world, presenting His Gospel
 - in proclamation
 - in social demonstration
- B. Prayer: expressing dependence on the power of His Spirit
 - individually
 - corporately
- C. Community: being in union with His body
 - in microcommunities
 - in macrocommunities
- D. Disenculturation: being freed from cultural binds
 - destructive
 - protective
- E. Theological Integration: having the mind of Christ
 - toward revealed truth
 - toward your culture

4. Three Stages Leading to Revival

In order that Christian workers may use the above model in an appropriate manner, it is necessary to recognize the three stages leading to revival. These three stages are the crisis stage, the intercessory stage, and the proclamation stage. Figure 1 indicates that whilst each stage might begin a little later than the preceding one, eventually they continue simultaneously.

Lovelace asserts that it is the responsibility of Church leadership to ensure that the three parts of the model are operating at depth continuously. A Christian worker going to minister in a situation where parts of the model are not in place will need to determine where to start in proclaiming the Word of God within the Church. In many cases the beginning point will be in part II, but sometimes it will be necessary to begin at part I. People who are outside of the Church will need to understand the truths outlined in part I.

One example of how the model might work. In the crisis stage an emphasis may need to be placed on II C, II D, III A, and III B. This emphasis would lead naturally into the intercessory stage. Towards the end of the proclamation stage a heavier emphasis should be placed on III C, D and E, to enable Christians to function profitably within the Body of Christ.

5. Methods Which May Foster Revival

The following insights should be kept in mind.

- a) The primary concern of God is with the human agent whom He has chosen to use. Intercessory prayer should include petitions for God to raise up new agents of revival.
- b) Revival results from the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. It comes down. It cannot be worked up.
- c) Prayer should be designed to take the movement of God's Spirit from the current stage to the next.
- d) The effective proclamation of the Word of God is a

“The primary concern of God is with the human agent whom He has chosen to use. Intercessory prayer should include petitions for God to raise up new agents of revival.”

major key to the fostering of revival. For the appropriate content of proclamation see figure 5.

- e) Truth without life is relatively ineffective. The Word of God must be preached with power and authority.
- f) Churches must be structured to encourage the proper functioning of cell groups so that new Christians can be nurtured, all Christians can live in close fellowship with other believers, and witness can be given to the power of the Gospel.
- g) In many situations, the revival will be best communicated through ministry teams which are made up of people who have complimentary gifts.
- h) Any training provided must take into account that the agent of revival mentioned in (a) above, and team members mentioned in (g) above, require experience, training and the development of giftedness within the context of ministry which deals with the supernatural intervention of God into this world's affairs.
- i) All Christian workers should know how to pray effectively, and especially as intercessors for revival in its preliminary and contemporary stages.

6. Avoiding Decline in Revivals

In a sense, people have more influence on a revival's decline than they have on its beginning. Some reasons for decline have been identified. If Lovelace's model is implemented the possibility for decline is diminished.

Workers should be on guard continuously against the following dangers.

- a) Cycles of decline evidenced by Nominality in the Church and increasing sinfulness in the society. The failure of one generation to pass faith on to the next is a major danger sign.
- b) Opposition from the devil. Refer to figure 4.
- c) Evidence of a lack of true Christlike behaviour in the Church, especially pride concerning the revival and arrogance which

betrays a lack of love towards others.

- d) Failure of Christians to conform to Biblical patterns of life and witness. Refer particularly to part II of Figure 5. note that individual revival needs to lead to corporate revival and the revival of corporate structures in order to assure adequate witness and the continuity of the revival itself.

A CHALLENGE

One contemporary reason for lack of prayer for revival in Australia is that revival is seen by many Christians to be the same as the Charismatic Renewal movement. This understanding causes some to feel that they have “arrived” and others to be afraid. In either case, it would be helpful to compare and contrast the Charismatic renewal movement and revival to determine whether the two are the same, and to discover how they might become the same if they are not.

Three challenges confront Australian Christians.

The first is to discern whether or not the times are right for God to move through the land by His Spirit. I believe they are!

The second challenge is to become intercessors – allowing God to change us as He changes the Church and the nation. I believe He can!

The third challenge is to be disciplined in the systematic and faithful proclamation of the Word of God, leading people to know and experience the Gospel from its preparation stage to its fullest outworking in daily life. I believe we should!

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