

## THE RIVER OF REVIVAL - THE FLOW OF THE HOLY SPIRIT Part 1

Here is an account by John Wesley and George Whitfield, and they speak of the strange physical phenomena which took place in their meetings in England. Wesley's journal reads:

*"Monday, January 1st 1739 - Mr Hall, Kinchin, Ingham, Whitefield Lane, with about sixty of our brethren. At about three in the morning, as we were continuing in prayer, the power of God came mightily upon us. So much so, that many cried out in exceeding joy, and many fell to the ground weeping. And as soon as we were recovered a little from that awe, and amazement at the presence of His Majesty, we broke out with one voice... 'We praise Thee, O God, we acknowledge Thee to be the Lord'."*

This week, with Rodney Howard-Browne, we experienced similar distinctive and extraordinary spiritual activity which to many of you may have been "unfamiliar manifestations of God's presence." Rodney described himself as a *revivalist* and therefore, I feel it necessary to explain what this means. True revival is comprised of two main elements, and it should be manifesting through two distinct stages. The two main elements are simply *'the believers'* and the *'unbelievers'*. And the two distinct stages are; **internal revival** [that is, when the church is set on fire - accompanied by the lost sheep (the prodigals) coming home]; followed by **external revival** [when we see the conviction and conversion of the unbeliever on a mass scale].

In scripture, various forms of the word "revive" appear, including such words as "**restore**", "**renew**", "**awaken**", and "**refresh**." All these words can be applied to what God is constantly doing among His people. And note, every one of these aspects of revival takes place in the first stage [what God is doing internally, within His church]. Therefore, included in this **internal resurgence**, that causes the *restoration, renewal, awakening and refreshing* of God's people, must be a definite and distinctive '*outpouring of the Holy Spirit*'.

Some other scriptural definitions of revival which could be applied to this first stage can include:

1. When God's Almighty presence comes down and there is a great awakening [**Isaiah 64:1,2**].
2. When God's anointed and uncompromised Word comes back into the churches with power and authority [**Nehemiah 8 and 9, Acts 2:37, 38**].
3. When God's purity, holiness and peace breaks through and transforms the saints - preparing the bride for Christ's return [**Ephesians 5:26,27**].
4. When God pours out His Spirit and refreshes His people, and there is an overflow of joy [**Acts 2**].
5. When God's glorious presence intensifies and God's divine purposes accelerate - the result being 'fullness' and 'fulfilment' in the church [**Isaiah 60**].
6. When new wine is poured into new wineskins, and fresh anointing equips the saints to do the work of the ministry [**Matthew 9:17**].
7. When we see repentance and hear a cry for mercy from within the church - for only then will God hear us and heal our land [**2 Chronicles 7:14**].
8. When there is a growing emphasis on prayer and intercession, and God's servants are given strategy to counteract spiritual decline and create spiritual momentum [**2 Chronicles 18 - 27**].

Throughout church history, the hearts of God's people have often cooled off and consequently become harden toward Him. This in itself creates a need for revival. Therefore, we can safely say that there is always an infilling and an outpouring of God's Spirit into the body of Christ whenever it threatens to act like a corpse [and before rigor mortise sets in]. God want's His church alive, radiant, full of joy and vitality! He also wants His people to be full of faith; walking on the water, living in the fire, and standing on the mountaintop. The Lord want's the very best for you and I, and His Spirit is here to ensure that we get exactly that!

**Habakkuk 2:14** says, "**For the earth will be filled with knowledge of the glory of the Lord as the waters cover the sea.**" However, before the whole earth can be filled with the knowledge of the glory of God, divine rain must first fall and cover His people! There must be inward revival! And one thing's for sure, heightened spiritual activity is going to intensify, and then continue, and you must be ready to experience it without fear, apprehension, or apathy.

When God sovereignly visits any group of individuals, His manifest presence and power often affects their bodies in some way or other. God is, of course, present everywhere. But there seems to be times and seasons where He is more intensely present. He seems to draw aside one or two layers of the protective curtain between Him and us, and exposes our frailty to the awesome energies of His divine being. The result is, He profoundly affects the whole person. Man is *spirit, soul and body*, and these components cannot be divided when standing in God's presence. Man reacts to God as a whole being. Therefore, it is foolish to think that man can react or respond in the realm of the spirit without anything at all happening to the rest of him.

God's divine presence often causes powerful stimulus to operate in the physical, mental and emotional realm collectively. And sometimes, something happens which is so powerful that the physical frame begins to shake like its experiencing an earthquake [**Acts 4:31**]. I believe God has started to shake us in order to wake us up [**Ephesians 5:14**]. One thing is for sure though; when God moves through such strange behaviour He is bound to get your attention - right?

On Friday night the Spirit started to manifest in a unique and extraordinary way through some teenagers that were visiting the church. At first, I couldn't understand what was going on, but suddenly, as our own teenagers started to respond with loud groans and tears, I realised what God was doing. According to **Romans 8:26** and **Hebrews 5:7**, these sighs, deep groans, loud cries and tears were expressions of their hearts and spirits [inspired by the Holy Spirit] and taken directly before the throne of God. Amongst other things, I'm convinced that as each and every teenager was touched in this way he or she began to intercede "in the spirit" for other teenagers - for their family, friends and those still lost. And because of this a great harvest awaits and revival has broken out in our youth. Nothing can hold back the torrent of "living water" that has now been released!

Here are just a few biblical examples of the profound, and sometimes bizarre effects that God's divine presence has had on His people:

- \* *1 Samuel 10:11* - Saul was in a trancelike state, prophesying when the Spirit came upon him.
- \* Also, in *1 Samuel 19:23,24* we find him laying naked on the ground all day and all night prophesying.
- \* In *2 Chronicles 5:13,14* the glory of the Lord filled the temple so the priests were unable to stand and do their duties.

- \* *Ezekiel 1:28, 3:23, 43:4* - Ezekiel fell face down before the glory of the Lord.
- \* *Daniel 8:17,18* - Daniel collapsed and sank into a deep sleep during a vision and an angelic visitation.
- \* Also, in *Daniel 10:7-11* we find him with no strength left, laying on the ground trembling.
- \* When the soldiers came to arrest Jesus, in *John 18:6*, they all fell to the ground when He said "I am He!"
- \* On the Day of Pentecost, the place shook, they spoke in other tongues, and they behaved like drunken men [*Acts 2*].
- \* In *Revelation 1:17* the apostle John said, "When I saw Him, I fell at His feet as though dead."

I REST MY CASE!!!

The River of God is now flowing fervently into the lives of the family here at Cornerstone, and it's not going to diminish or decrease. This river is going to permeate and saturate every area of the ministry and flow out into the surrounding district and the Greater London Area. Thereafter, its will flow into the whole of England, Scotland, Ireland and Wales. Nothing can stop its flow! And we will not make any attempt to contain it or harness it. Any such foolish action can only bring about stagnation and the river will quickly become polluted. The leadership is fully committed to ensuring that the Holy Spirit has His way - we are believing for a great harvest.