

# Four Steps to Revival

Preparing the Body of Christ for  
the greatest revival of all time

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## PREFACE



I am writing out this message of the Four Steps to Revival because I believe that it is the best hope for a solution to the deep spiritual problems that face our world. As do many other Christians who have been watching Biblical prophecies unfold in the news, I believe that we are living in the last days. While many believe that we have little cause to worry because they expect to be raptured out of the troubles that are coming upon the face of the Earth, I believe that the Church will not only face them, but will go through them all the way to when Jesus Christ returns.

Shakespeare once wrote that “all the world’s a stage”. That is truer than what he might have suspected. All the politics, the business, careers, and hobbies and pastimes of our lives are merely tests in Life that determine our eternal destiny. The Church is supposed to be the landmark and lighthouse that points the way to Heaven in a landscape that is often forgetful of the dual realities that we live in. But when the Church loses its vibrancy and its light grows dim, we find ourselves easily enamored with the other things that make up our lives. Our focus shifts from where we are going, to where we are, and the urgency of eternal judgment takes a back seat to the more immediate sensory inputs of the world around us. We soon lose our way, forget that this stage we are on is only a test, and lose our edge on what is really important. Life becomes complicated with thorns and snares, which pull with an

ever-increasing compulsion further and further away from true salvation.

Revival is the only solution. Without a bright shining light to point us in the true direction of Life, we can only stumble about in darkness. Only a Holy Ghost Revival can light those fires again and make our lighthouses illuminate the path to Salvation.

The word Revival is in most cases a misnomer because it suggests bringing a dead body back to life again. But throughout history, the great moves of God have been more of a rebellion against an established religious system that has grown cold and secular. Once a body is dead, resuscitation will not bring it back to life. There is a need for a new life springing up in a new body, not the resurrection of the old apostate system which has died.

There is time for one more revival. Jesus Christ is coming back to Earth soon, but before He comes, it is written that there will be one more last great revival – the greatest of all time. It is for this last great revival that this booklet is written.

All fires must have a match to start them. My prayer is that this booklet will be a match to help ignite a blaze of revival that will burn around the world.

## INTRODUCTION



### **The Cycle of Apostasy and Revival**

**A**postasy and Revival are cyclical going all the way back to the time of Joshua. Whenever there is a great move of God, the Church is energized and becomes a vibrant and embracing part of the lives of its people. Joy and gladness are signs of the times. Prosperity and life uplifts not only the Church itself, but the entire society surrounding it. These are wonderful times.

Within a short while, however, the brightness begins to fade and the wonderful blessings of an intimate walk in the Spirit begins to be taken for granted and is traded in for a fascination with what the world has to offer instead. Our focus slowly shifts from the eternal to the temporal, from the longings of our souls to the lusts of our flesh, from the promises of the invisible to the immediate gratification of the visible. Salvation and religion begin to yield to a cheap and easy grace - one that is less intrusive of our personal lives and less demanding of an admonition for holiness. The broad path seems to make much more sense and is much easier to travel down. After all, we wonder, why should we endure suffering when Jesus suffered in our place on the Cross? Religion becomes established, sophisticated, and entrenched in a society that it feels no compulsion to challenge. The persecution that once lit the fires of revival that forged our churches has now

dissipated and is no longer considered necessary. We have arrived, and are satisfied.

When there is no price to pay, true Christianity does not seem so precious, and as with all things cheap, we find it much easier to discard.

As the fires of revival die down to simmering embers, the Church still retains its shape and structure, but it loses its heart. The heart of revival is not the wonderful feeling of the Spirit of God as it flows through us or the excitement of miracles and supernatural manifestations of the Spirit, but rather the winning of lost souls. This is the whole purpose and heart of revival. Revival is the heartbeat of God, and winning the lost is the heartbeat of revival. Jesus did not die so we could have a nice church and a prosperous life, but to save souls. When we forget that, we miss the whole meaning of the Cross.

When we become so enamored with how good the flow of the Holy Spirit feels that we lose our agony for lost souls, we turn off the faucet of that flow and are left with nothing but church. We rarely notice the decrease until it is nothing but a trickle, and slowly we become used to the institution rather than the inspiration. Our candlestick is slowly removed and we gradually get used to the darkness until we no longer notice that we can't see the Truth anymore.

At such times, God always sends His prophets to call us to repentance. The job of a prophet is not to be a Gypsy tea leaf reader to tell our futures - we can look up our horoscope in the daily newspaper to do that -- to call God's people to repentance. It is a job that no one likes -- neither the one called as the prophet, nor the ones that he is called to prophesy to. As a result, prophets are most often either ignored and dismissed or persecuted and

killed. Their message never goes along with the current hypnotic trend, but is designed to cause trouble as it upsets the foundation of dead works.

One of the marks of apostasy is the flourishing of prophets of peace and prosperity. Like weeds, they grow out of barren ground and find root in the worldliness of the church. False prophets do not call us to repentance; they call us to repose. There is never any challenge in their prophesies; only promises of peace and prosperity. They do not point us to the fear of God, but rather drench us in the love of God. The problem is that their definition of the love of God is little more than a warm, fuzzy feeling -- a comfortable "relationship" with a God who is our "Daddy". The Word of God, however, defines the love of God as the keeping of His commandments, which as Proverbs 16:6 points out to us, is attained through the fear of God. Like Pied Pipers, however, they play the tune that our flesh wants to hear, and draw us off with visions of sugar plums, instead of the fruits of repentance.

Although prophets are rarely accepted in their time, the seeds that they plant find fertile ground in the next generation. That new generation, like Gideon, will sense that the exiting religious structure is no longer answering the needs of their hearts, and will begin to search for something more than what their fathers have offered them. The prophet Joel describes it as beasts groaning for pasture and not being able to find it. In their search for the Truth, they will find the words of those prophets whom their fathers dismissed. Those words ring true in their soul and begin to grow in their hearts to encourage them to reach up in hope for a fresh new outpouring of God.

Gideon threshed his wheat by the winepress in secret, and so do these truth-seekers. They thresh the wheat of

the Word of God alongside the winepress of prayer to seek the truth of God outside of the established liturgies of a church structure that has grown irrelevant and apostate.

And so it goes, over and over again. Is this by design of God, or is it a symptom of the failure of human flesh? I do not have the answer to that, but I do know that, just as Jesus was a root out of dry ground, so do great harvests come out of times of spiritual drought.

We are in just such a time as that right now. We are ready for the rain and a subsequent time of harvest, but this time the outpouring of God's Holy Spirit will eclipse all other revivals. As we come out of the spiritual famine that Amos foretold just before the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ, the greatest revival of all time is scheduled to arrive.

But no revival is without its price. It is that price that this booklet is about.

1:

## RECOGNITION



*“And I went out by night by the gate of the valley, even before the dragon well, and to the dung port, and viewed the walls of Jerusalem, which were broken down, and the gates thereof were consumed with fire. Then I went on to the gate of the fountain, and to the king’s pool: but there was no place for the beast that was under me to pass. Then went I up in the night by the brook, and viewed the wall, and turned back, and entered by the gate of the valley, and so returned.” Nehemiah 2:13-15*

**T**he first step to any restoration is the realization that we are no longer in the place of blessing that we once were. Our walls are broken down, the temple is destroyed, and our churches have been carried away to a Babylon where we still try to hold on to our religious conventions in a vain attempt to convince ourselves that we are still right with God.

Nehemiah faced these walls that had been broken down to rubble, but before he could ever begin the task of rebuilding it, he had to acknowledge the sins of his people to Almighty God. Fasting with unceasing prayer day and night has to precede any restoration. Without that repentant acknowledgement going beforehand,

Nehemiah<sup>1</sup> would have still been in Babylon. Likewise, if the Church does not acknowledge her apostasy and repent, the God cannot restore her because she would go right back to the condition that caused her apostasy in the first place.

Those who go through the slow process of apostasy are rarely able to see it creeping into their church and can hardly accept that their church is dying. The monotonous process of following the religious traditions set by our fathers cloaks the disparity of our current desolation. We can't see it because we aren't paying attention, and besides, it is too uncomfortable to think about. It is so much easier to listen to Pied Pipers who tell us that God still loves us no matter what, than to face the ugly truth that we have long ago left the presence of God and now are facing judgment.

We don't see it because we don't want to see it.

## The Challenge<sup>2</sup>

I preach at the scores of churches overseas, and almost all of them expect the great white American evangelist

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<sup>1</sup> (5th century bc ) a Hebrew leader who supervised the rebuilding of the walls of Jerusalem ( c. 444) and introduced moral and religious reforms ( c. 432).

<sup>2</sup> The use of challenged with a preceding adverb, e.g., physically challenged, originally intended to give a more positive tone than such terms as disabled or handicapped, arose in the U.S. in the 1980s. Despite the originally serious intention, the term rapidly became stalled by uses whose intention was to make fun of the attempts at euphemism and whose tone was usually clearly ironic: examples include cerebrally challenged, follicularly challenged, etc.

ORIGIN Middle English (in the senses 'accusation' and 'accuse'): from Old French *challenge* (noun), *challenger* (verb), from Latin *calumnia* 'calumny,' *calumniari* 'calumniate.'

to bless them with an encouraging message. Instead, the first thing I tell them is that I am not there so they can be blessed, get money, find a husband, or increase their crops - I am there to show them the truth.

My first challenge to them is to ask them if they believe that they have a good church. If they are satisfied with their church and their Christian walk, then I need go no further. Let me find a congregation that is hungry for something more in God than just having church functions. I am not looking for someone who is not looking - I am only looking for those who are looking.

How many souls got saved last week? How about last month? Okay, how about last year? This is the litmus test for Christianity. It doesn't matter how nice your church is, how wonderful your pastor is, or how much you love each other - are you winning souls for Jesus Christ? Yes or no.

Every week you sit in the same seat surrounded by the same faces. You tell each other the same nice things that you told them last week. You tell each other that you want revival, but you expect it to just fall out of the sky into your laps while you sit there like a lump of fat on a wooden pew and do nothing. As the old adage says, if you keep on doing the same things you're doing, you will always have the same things you have, but if you want something different, you're have to do something different. And if you do nothing, nothing will happen.

At some point there has to be a realization that there is nothing new happening in your church. The Spirit of God is no longer present, and souls are not getting saved -- and it doesn't look like there will be any new influx of sinners on their way to your altar any time soon. Why should they? What have you got to offer them beyond timeworn expressions that have been repeated so many times, their

original luster has turned dull and they no longer hold any real meaning to the unsaved. Perhaps they are not coming to your church because they are afraid that they will become just like you.

Some people don't care. They have church just the way they like it and don't want anything to upset the comfortable balance they have currently enjoy. These are old winebottles that cannot hold new wine and resent any change. But there has to come a point where we at least acknowledge that something is missing and that the fire on our altars has gone out. Only once we acknowledge that, can we turn our hearts to hear His call to revival.

### **His Last Request**

As He was about to leave, the last thing that Jesus asked us to do for him was to preach the Gospel to the entire world, and he handed us the Great Commission. When someone we love is about to leave us for the last time, it is a very poignant time. As he pauses at the door, about to cross the threshold, and turns to us with a last request, it is something that we hold close to our heart. That last request is important. A dying father who gives his last request to his sons to carry out for him is able to die in peace knowing that they will fulfill it. Jesus gave us the Great Commission as His last request. It was the whole purpose for His death on the Cross. Jesus died to save sinners from Hell, and he left us with the job of finishing that task. There was no admonition to become learned scholars, prominent leaders of society, or ecclesiastical watchdogs. It was simple - win souls. Deny yourself, pick up your cross and follow Him. And where did He go? To Golgotha to give His life for the lost.

Have we chosen that same path, or have we meandered through the pathways of Life that lead nowhere? Have we convinced ourselves that we are fulfilling His last wish by coming to church? Has fellowship with saints replaced saving sinners? Are we content to know that while we are lifting up our hands in worship during a song service that we are saved, but limit our horizon to the church walls? When we turn our attention inward and lose sight of those outside, we lose our grasp on the purpose of our own Salvation. When a church will not look beyond its walls, it denies its very reason for existence.

We did not get saved for ourselves. If the whole reason for your salvation was so you could go to Heaven, then why not just come to the altar, say a prayer of repentance, and keel over and die? Why hang around? You're just wasting the air. Why stay here in this world? Just go. Get out of here. Go to Heaven and be done with it!

Ah, but you didn't die, did you? Perhaps it is about something more than your own salvation. Perhaps we have received this gift of salvation so we could pass it on to others. Why else would we still be here?

When our altars are bare, we are ignoring this last request of our Savior who gave His life for these souls that we have dismissed. We have our feast and have invited our friends, but have not sought the blind, the maimed, and the poor like Jesus asked us to do.



2:

## DESPERATE FOR REVIVAL



*“And when Rachel saw that she bare Jacob no children, Rachel envied her sister; and said unto Jacob, Give me children, or else I die.” Genesis 30:1*

**I**t is one thing to realize that you do not have a revival in your church, but it is an entirely different thing to want one. It may seem that these two things would naturally go together, but they do not.

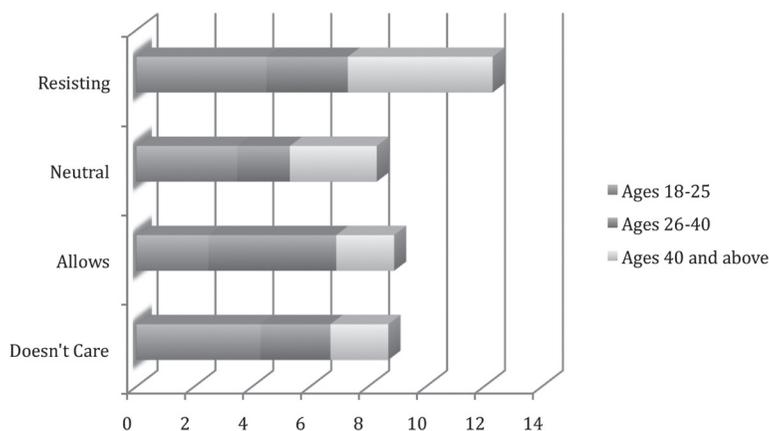
Rachael was not asking for a blessing for herself – she was desperate for souls. This is where most of us miss it. It is not about us – it is about others. This is not about revival for revival’s sake or a move of God so we can feel good about ourselves. It is a deep conviction in our hearts that souls are going to spend Eternity in Hell if we don’t do something to stop it.

How bad do you have to want revival? Like Rachael, you have to want it bad enough to die for it; willing to give your life to see souls get saved. Anything less than that is like a sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal – lots of noise, but no substance. Or as 2<sup>nd</sup> Peter describes it, wells without water and clouds without rain. We say we want one because we know we’re supposed to, but how badly do we really want it? The price of a true revival is higher than human flesh wants to pay. It takes the Spirit of the Lord to bring us to that place of selfless passion that will

drive us past our comfort zone to take upon ourselves the suffering of the Body of Christ.

This is not a mindless suffering for suffering's sake, but a commitment to offer ourselves, both spiritually and physically, to see the ultimate cause of Christ reign victorious. In the Book of Revelations, God does not admonish us that those who try will eat of the Tree of Life, but those who overcome. The greatest obstacle we face is our own fleshly desires. We have to reach past what is normal and comfortable and enter into a walk with God that has crucified those fleshly desires so we can walk in the Spirit of God. This is the challenge that God sets before us to test our determination. It separates the sheep from the goats and raises the real men and women of God from ranks of mediocrity.

## Resistance to Change



Many people simply do not like change. Once they organize things the way they think they should be, they will defend them ferociously. A lot of folks like the feel

of constricted walls around them to feel safe. Any breach of that security threatens the way they have everything organized in their minds. They just have too much trouble walking without solid ground under their feet, so it is easier to stick with the liturgical traditions they are used to than to break into something that seems untested and revolutionary. They are stuck in “church as usual” -- old winebottles that cannot stretch with the new wine.

The problem is that the foundations that they have built upon are based upon the wrong premise. Religion is the carnal representation of our spiritual walk with God, but if we grasp onto the carnal to secure the spiritual, we will find ourselves with a handful of sand. Faith is the evidence of things NOT seen, and it is the substance of things hoped for. If your hope is anchored on things that you can see because you are not able take hold of that which you cannot see, then it will be very difficult for you to embrace a supernatural change in your church.

Lazarus was called forth out of a tomb of stone, bound hand and foot in the grave clothes of religious traditions and his face was bound with a napkin so he couldn't see. Many today are locked inside a similar stone tomb of religion with no way out. Jesus' command was to loose Lazarus from those traditions and set him free. It takes the hand of God to roll away that stone and set them free, but His command to us is to loose them from the rotting traditions that bind them. They can't do it themselves. We have to hold these people up in prayer, because only God can reassure them to let go of the leather-like stiffness of old traditions.



3:

## REPENTANCE

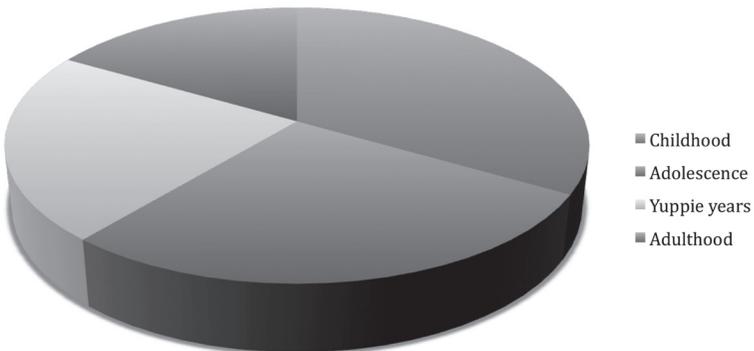


*“If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land.” 2<sup>nd</sup> Chronicles 7:14*

**T**his much quoted scripture in 2<sup>nd</sup> Chronicles is touted as a banner cry for revival, but in order to bring our land to that point of repentance, someone has to get on their knees. It has to start somewhere. No revival comes without repentance.

### The Importance of Winning Souls

#### Winning a Soul



Before we fall to our knees in repentance, we have to know what we are repenting of. The repentance that the prophet Joel calls for is one that “rends the heart and not the garment”. True repentance has to issue forth from the bottom of a broken heart or it is merely a form of Laodecian hypocrisy. Is it that we just haven’t had good enough “church”? Or we haven’t sung loud enough? Or we haven’t smiled enough? What is the heart of the problem? What do we need to repent of?

Joel tells us that the corn, the wine, and the oil have been cut off from the house of the Lord because we have let the harvest of the field perish. In other words, souls are perishing out in the harvest fields, and God is blaming us. Jesus gave his life to save sinners, but if we don’t care enough to even go out and bring them into the House of God, then God will cut off His Spirit from the church. And that is why our churches are so dead.

If the primary reason for God to send revival is to win the lost, then that is where we should turn our attention to. Few of us realize how utterly important soul-winning is to God. This is the heart of the problem. We have to take our focus off of ourselves and turn it to others.

*“I have declared, and have saved, and I have showed, when there was no strange god among you: therefore ye are my witnesses, saith the LORD, that I am God.”* Isaiah 43:12

I find in most churches that people have a tendency to believe that if they just support their church that somehow that will translate into new people coming in to get saved. They leave the burden and the worry to their pastors to take care of. After all, isn’t that what pastors get paid to do? My retort is that Shepherds don’t give birth to sheep;

sheep give birth to sheep. God places the responsibility to witness to the lost firmly at the feet of us all. And He makes it clear that it is not only a convenient thing for us to do, but our very place in God is at stake here. This is not a thing to do; it is THE thing to do.

Winning souls is not just another function of the church, something that we do when we have the time, or something that is relegated to the leadership of the church to perform. This is not something on the same level as having a canned food drive, gathering toys to give out to the poor for Christmas, or organizing a Blood Drive. Winning souls is the very essence of the call of Christ; it is the very heartbeat of God. It is what you were called to do when you got saved. It is one of the two primary functions of the church. Jesus said that He would that we bore much fruit, and that our fruit would remain. (John 15:16) Before your fruit can remain, we must first go out and win them to the Lord.

### **The Church at Ephesus.**

In Revelations 2, God calls out to the Church at Ephesus that He knows their works, their labor and patience, and even how they hate sin. Oh, they are rich in all kinds of “church stuff”, but ... they have lost their first love.

That first love is what you had when you first got saved. Do you remember how you felt when that burden of sin was first lifted off you? When you felt free for the first time in your life? When you felt like you had passed from Death unto Life? You were so excited that you had to tell everyone what Jesus Christ had done for you. That’s your first love.

But we have lost that fresh excitement and have settled into “church as usual”. The vibrancy and excitement has

dulled over time and we no longer are burning with that same holy fire. We have left our first love.

And what does God say to us? Either repent and do those first works, or else. He says He will come quickly - no fooling around - and will remove our candlestick. Without the candlestick burning the Light, we will be in darkness, stumbling around lost. Doing "church stuff", attending services, singing songs, giving canned goods to the poor and toys at Christmas are great things to do ... but it will not stave off the judgment of God.



