

World Changing Revival

By: Pastor Ronald Marr

Religion is up and morality down. Evangelicals in America and England were similarly frustrated in 1730. They, too, had failed to reform their societies after decades of political and social effort.

But within a decade the greatest evangelical awakening since the Reformation broke out across America, England and Europe. The political and social cultures of the Anglo-American world were “Christian.”

In the 18th century there were three massive revivals, the Great Awakening in the American colonies, the English Evangelical Revival led by John Wesley and George Whitefield, and the revival of continental Pietism under Count Ludwig von Zinzendorf.

These great revivals, and lesser ones they encompassed, had many common characteristics:

1. Revivals were preceded by **corporate prayer**. Early in the century it was accepted that revival usually followed God's outpouring of a spirit of intercession for revival. So in the 1720s and 30s, American and British evangelicals turned to prayer for such an anointing. Then, first in 1734-35 in Connecticut, led by Jonathan Edwards, then in place after place, prayer preceded revival.

Zinzendorf's Moravian community had started a round-the-clock watch of corporate prayer in 1727. It continued for **100 years**.

In 1743 Rev. John Sutherland started three revival prayer groups in Scotland. A year later, revival fell.

In 1743 Edwards suggested a “Concert of Prayer” for world wide revival. It was implemented by churches in Scotland, England, and America four times a year.

2. Revivals had **strong leaders**. 18th century evan-

Success Thru Sacrifice & Suffering

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There's a serious flaw in the thinking of almost all Christians. This flaw leads most Christians to give up their pursuit of God.

Every new Christian wants to seek after God, to love Him, and to walk with Him in sweet communion and fellowship.

It's not long before most become discouraged and give up. There are doubtless many reasons.

They don't count on the extent of their continuing desire to please themselves and displease God. They know little or nothing about the awesome battle Satan and His hordes engage them in. They don't know the power of the indwelling, enabling Spirit of God, and of Christ within. They don't spend sufficient time seeking the Lord in prayer and the Word. And more ...

They just don't realize the battle they're in! Here's the flaw. Let's get it straight, the Christian life is no picnic. It's a battle from day one until we're finally at home with our Savior and our God in a perfect heaven where there'll be no more pain or sorrow, no more tears, just unmitigated joy and eternal bliss. First, this sinful world is a place of pain. *“The whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain.”* - Romans 8:22

Second, God uses pain to purify us. It is a required subject in God's school house. *“Our light affliction, which is but for a moment, is working for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.”* - II Corinthians 4:17

Third, to live pleasing Him, we must deny ourselves, take up our cross, and follow Jesus. This is

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No matter what God teaches me, it seems always to return to the need of always resting in Him. Anything else, anything less, appears to me to be self-effort and self-righteous good works. It isn't God, it's ultimately still me.

Then comes the reality that I can't rest in the Lord if I won't trust Him to be always able and willing to meet my every need, no matter how impossible it may appear to be.

And I can't trust Him if I'm not willing to accept whatever He sends my way, no matter how apparently objectionable, even hurtful it may be. I must be willing to see every circumstance as ultimately ... in the light of eternity ... not only good for me, but the very best possible.

“My God shall supply all your needs according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus... All things work together for good to them that love God... I have learned in whatsoever state I am therewith to be content.”

We must be willing to let God do absolutely whatever He wants to do with our lives without objection. Just quietly let go whatever circumstances are into God's hands. Let control go absolutely and totally from our hands into His.

Have no will but His will.

Anything less than this I tend to see as either self-effort or mere intellectual knowledge or theology, and entirely ineffectual.

After the great missionary statesman, Hudson Taylor, had founded the China Inland Mission to be the first to take the gospel to untold millions in inland China, after he had experienced a dynamic new life in Christ, after he had buried his wife and two of his children in China, after he in China was separated from the rest of his deeply-loved children in England, after he had returned to England only to have to direct the mission's affairs from his bed, after he was back in China often near death and having buried a number of his missionaries there, after having for many years trusted God alone for the funds to meet the vast needs of a growing mission at home and in China while the quickest communication between them was more than two months, after having seen many of his godly dreams fulfilled in the opening of inland China to the gospel, he testified:

“One of the happiest periods of my life was that period of forced inactivity, when one could do nothing but ‘rest in the Lord, and wait patiently for him,’ and see Him meeting all one’s needs.”

On one occasion when he was informed that serious rioting was threatening two of his mission stations, he was heard to whistle, “Jesus I am resting, resting in the joy of what thou art; I am finding out the greatness of Thy loving heart.”

When questioned, he said, “Would you have me anxious and troubled? That would not help them and would certainly incapacitate me for my work. I have just to roll the burden on the Lord.”

*Write to us and request more copies to share.
Rest in God*

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a constant dying to ourselves, our will, and our ways. And we find it most objectionable.

“He that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple.” - Luke 14:33

To put it plainly, if we aren't willing to suffer with God gladly, we'll not reign with Him, now or forever. I know whereof I speak. I care for my wife night and day. She's had Parkinson's Disease for over 30 years. Basically she can't walk, talk, think, or eat well.

I've aged 20 years in the past 10.

I teach trusting, resting, and rejoicing in Jesus. I teach worshiping, praising, and seeking God, and taking authority over Satan as means to those ends. But often, confronting the pressures of life, all I can do right then is ask for His help to submit, accept disappointment as His messenger of love, say it's o.k., and look forward to heaven with joyous anticipation...

“The sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us. ... We are more than conquerors through Him that loved us...” -Selected from Romans 8:18-37

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gelicals believed God would raise up extraordinary leaders for special times of outpouring of the Spirit. In 1740, Whitefield preached more than 175 sermons in 45 days in New England to crowds of up to 20,000. Wesley traveled, mostly on horseback, the equivalent of 10 times around the world.

3. Revival leaders denounced “legalism” and “rationalism,” emphasizing **justification by faith in the atoning death of Christ, and the absolute necessity of the New Birth**. Terror was preached before grace by ministers in the Connecticut Valley.

4. Revivalists were determined to challenge their hearers to **respond now**. They scarcely used notes, relying on the Spirit.

5. Revivalists **preached at non-traditional times in non-traditional places**.

6. **Music** contributed greatly.

7. Revival leaders often faced **fierce opposition**. Wesley often had rocks thrown at him, and was sometimes mobbed and beaten. Edwards' own church ejected him.

8. **Stories of revival spread revival**.

9. The revivalists **believed the Spirit's presence would be manifest**. Edwards believed he could be discerned, that he moved people “by a mighty invisible power,” and He sometimes caused a “visible commotion.”

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