

**GOD'S
LAW
OF
REVIVAL**

-What it is

-How it works

-Will bring Revival to any church

By

Armin R. Gesswein

PREFACE

I have learned from Scripture and through years of experience that there is a definite and wonderful way the Holy Spirit works in Revival.

I'd like to share it with you for your help and encouragement.

It can well be called a LAW OF REVIVAL.

It is very real, reliable, beautiful, and glorious.

When you learn it, your confidence and expectation will be quickened, as mine was.

God is not the author of confusion, but of order--Divine order. If He works according to laws in nature, He certainly does also in His Kingdom.

My prayer is that many will be helped in their praying for Revival, and that we will again see precious Revivals in our churches.

- The Author

WHAT IS THE LAW OF REVIVAL?

*I spake as I saw:
All's love, yet all's law.
(Anonymous)*

There is a simple law of Revival revealed in Scripture. It is profound and realistic. It makes sense, and it is very striking in its operation.

Jesus brings this law into full focus at the close of His earthly ministry. Speaking of the Holy Spirit he says:

It is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away the Helper (Comforter) (Advocate) will not come to you, but if I depart I will send Him to you. And when He has come, He will convict the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment: of sin, because they do not believe in Me, of righteousness, because I go to my Father and you see Me no more, of judgment, because the ruler of this world is judged. (John 16:7-11)

This is a classical compendium of what takes place when the Holy Spirit comes in Revival power.

I must confess that for a long time I read past the little word "YOU." But it is the key word, and we must not miss it.

Jesus is telling us: When I send the Holy Spirit to YOU (first) . . . to YOU my people . . . to YOU my Christians . . . to YOU my Church, then I will (through you) convict the world (the non-Christians) of sin, righteousness, and judgment . . ."

We are suddenly taken to the courtroom of heaven. The Holy Spirit is God's Advocate, and summons our consciences to the bar of His judgment.

The action of the Holy Spirit is twofold. It gives us the law of Revival, which can be stated like this:

THE HOLY SPIRIT BRINGS CONVICTION OF SIN TO THE NON-CHRISTIAN IN THE MEASURE IN WHICH HE FIRST WORKS IN CHRISTIANS IN THE CHURCH.

THE UNCONVERTED FEEL THEIR NEED OF SALVATION WHEN CHRISTIANS FIRST FEEL THE NEED FOR THEM TO BE SAVED.

WHEN CHRISTIANS FEEL THEIR DEEPER NEED OF THE HOLY SPIRIT, NON-CHRISTIANS WILL FEEL THEIR NEED OF CHRIST.

THE CHURCH MUST BE CONCERNED FOR THE WORLD IF THE WORLD IS TO BE CONCERNED FOR THE CHURCH.

NON-CHRISTIANS WILL DEAL WITH THEIR SINS ACCORDING TO THE WAY CHRISTIANS FIRST DEAL WITH THEIRS.

WHEN CHRISTIANS REPENT, SINNERS WILL REPENT.

SINNERS WILL PRAY AND SEEK THE LORD WHEN CHRISTIANS DO SO FIRST.

THE UNCONVERTED WILL BE "BORN AGAIN" OF THE HOLY SPIRIT WHEN CHRISTIANS ARE BURDENED AND BIRTH THEM IN PRAYER.

WHEN CHRISTIANS ARE FILLED WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT, NON-CHRISTIANS WILL BE CONVICTED OF SIN AND CONVERTED TO CHRIST.

WHEN REVIVAL IS STRONG IN THE CHURCH, EVANGELISM WILL BE STRONG IN THE WORLD.

WHEN CHRISTIANS WALK IN THE LIGHT THEY HAVE, SINNERS WILL SEE THE LIGHT IN AND THROUGH THEM.

WHEN GOD'S PEOPLE FACE THE MANY PLAIN SCRIPTURES ABOUT HOLINESS OF LIFE, CLEANSING FROM ALL SIN, PURITY, VICTORIOUS CHRISTIAN LIVING - SANCTIFICATION, SINNERS WILL FACE UP TO THE PLAIN WORD OF GOD REGARDING THEIR SALVATION.

THE PRIORITY OF PRAYER

Prayer is always number one with God. It has been said that whenever God is about to do any kind of a work He always begins with prayer.

John Wesley learned it well, and told it so well when he said: "All of God's works are done through believing prayer." It is always hard for us pragmatic westerners to learn this lesson.

The law of Revival applies here, in different degrees. For example, the speed and force with which the Holy Spirit works is measured by the pursuit and intensity of the praying. It reminds us of the thrust power which determines the life and speed of the jet plane.

IT ALL DEPENDS ON THE PRAYING OF THE INTERCESSORS.

E. M. Bounds says:

We need men and women who will pray with power and with confidence that they can reach out, grapple God, and draw out of His treasures for spiritual uses. Forceless prayers have no power to obtain answers, overcome difficulties, or gain complete and wonderful victories.

In Ephesians the Apostle Paul jets into the "heavenlies" and experiences the latest and greatest praying of his life. There he fully expresses the "Law of the Spirit" with these words: "Now unto Him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think according to the power that worketh in us, unto Him be glory in the Church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen." (Eph. 3:20,21) The prophet Elijah is a wonderful example of how God gives an immense answer to intense prayer and supplication.

ELIJAH PRAYS UP A STORM, AND GOD SENDS ONE DOWN! (1 Kings 18:41ff)
The answer corresponds to the asking. An outpouring of prayer precedes an outpouring of power. The Holy Spirit gives both. God works in us both to will and to do according to His good pleasure. (phil. 2:13)

The first Revival in any Revival is always a Revival of prayer. **THE LORD'S PLAN FOR BRINGING ABOUT REVIVAL IN CHURCHES IS TO BRING ABOUT THE PRAYING WHICH BRINGS IT ABOUT.**

THREEFOLD CONVICTION

We know that conviction of sin came to thousands of Jews on the day of Pentecost. Also, that it came in answer to the prayer and supplication of about 120 intercessors in the "upper room" in Jerusalem. There they were constant and importunate as they "continued in pray and supplication in one accord . . ." (Acts 1:14)

But what we do not seem to know is that it also came about in answer to the new and almighty praying of Jesus on His throne. He had foretold this the night before His crucifixion, but we do not seem to hear it. Speaking about His going to the Father He said: "And I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Comforter (Advocate) the Spirit of Truth . . ." (John 14:16, 17).

This tells us two things:

(1) Jesus' new praying at the throne will be much greater than His previous praying was on earth. If that was tremendous, this is enormous! We must keep this in mind when we come to the day of Pentecost (Acts 2). Because it was not only the answer to the mighty praying of the 120 in the "upper room," but it was also the answer to the new and almighty praying of Jesus.

In the days of His flesh, in his praying at the throne, Jesus did not wake up Jerusalem. But now He shakes the city as with the explosion of a bomb!

This should shake up our little ideas of prayer!

(2) It tells us that everything, even the most so-called "sovereign" acts of God (which we all relate to Revival) traces back to His and our praying. On the throne of the universe He "ever lives to make intercession for us." (Hebrews 7:25)

Let us beware of the error that God will send Revival in some "sovereign" way apart from prayer.

Jesus also foretold that the Holy Spirit would bring about a three-fold conviction, which is exactly what He did in Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost.

The Holy Spirit arrests us, convicts us of sin, righteousness and judgment, and takes us at once into the inner courtroom of our being.

1. ". . . of sin, because they do not believe in Me." (John 16:7) Unbelief is man's cardinal sin. Not only unbelief, but not believing in CHRIST. He is the touchstone. The Spirit's point of contact is the conscience through Christ as He probes into and lays open the depths of our innermost being. There is nothing deeper in man than his conscience. It is the

tap root of his being. If man does not go to the bottom in repentance when God's Spirit brings home to him the truth about Christ he is lost. Because Christ is the Truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth--the truth about God, and about man.

The same is true about the Holy Spirit. He is the "Spirit of truth." So if man does not wake up and repent when these two divine Persons go to work in the courtroom of his inner being, he is hiding his sins or holding back on truth, or living a lie somewhere. The Holy Spirit probes deeper than any psychologist. He allows no "refuge of lies." The truth of Christ is ultimate and eternal truth, and we must not tamper with it. No one can "take it or leave it" and still go on living as usual. This truth about Christ brings us face to face with the living God! It is our day of decision and eternal destiny.

Jesus made this clear to Nicodemus when He said:

"This is the judgment (criterion, test), that though Light has come into the world, yet men have loved darkness rather than the light, for their works were evil. For everyone who does wrong hates the light, and stays away from it, else his deeds would be found out. But he who follows the truth comes to the light, so that his works may be shown to have been done in God." (John 3:19-21, Norlie's Simplified New Testament)

That is why, when the Holy Spirit works in genuine Revival, man is brought face to face with the living God as in the day of judgment. In a real sense it is his judgment day with respect to sin and condemnation. For if he then accepts Christ as His Savior (and He is just that, a Savior, our Redeemer from all SIN) the Scripture says his condemnation and judgment have been removed.

Jesus says plainly:

Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that hears my word, and believes on Him that sent me, has everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation, but is passed from death unto life." (John 5:24)

There is therefore no condemnation to them who are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. (Romans 8:1)

A genuine Revival brings us to this ultimate REALITY. The awe of God goes to the depths of man's being "far as the curse is found" and the work of God is lasting. This is not first of all an emotional experience; it is an in-depth conscience experience. When people repent and go to the bottom on sin in their lives the work is genuine. Man is without excuse before God. The Spirit of God who is a holy Spirit is in control of our inner courtroom.

2. ". . . of righteousness, because I go to the Father . . ." (John 16:10) Here also CHRIST is the focus and the issue. The Holy Spirit always manifests and ministers Christ. The more He is at work the more we see of Christ. The first thing that hits us when He convicts

us is this: JESUS WAS RIGHT ALL THE TIME. ONE HUNDRED PERCENT RIGHT! I WAS WRONG. I AM THE SINNER--UNRIGHTEOUS--SELF-RIGHTEOUS. We are not only convinced about it; we are convicted. We can stifle and refuse the voice of the conscience, but we cannot get rid of the conviction. We are in the grip of the Holy Spirit--the living God in Person.

All this has to do with God's righteousness which is something very different from living by certain rules, or ritual, or being "religious." Like Saul of Tarsus, before his conversion, who was very religious even though his life was against God. On the Damascus road, fired up with religious zeal and persecuting Christians, he was smitten with conviction, and was converted to Christ in one of the most dramatic conversions of all time. (see Acts 9)

When the Holy Spirit convicts a person he wants more than anything in the world to get right with God--repent--change--be changed--receive Christ's forgiveness--be justified--have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. (Romans 5:1)

The Holy Spirit is God's Advocate, and this is what He does when He takes charge of His courtroom in a Revival.

3. ". . . of judgment, because the prince (ruler) of this world has been judged." (John 16:11) When Christ died for our sins on the Cross, He dealt Satan a death blow. The same blow dealt with our sins in atonement. It was our great day of atonement. The spirit of the world and iniquity was concentrated there under Satan, the "prince of this world." The day of Christ's death was indeed a day of judgment! When Christ died He cried "It is finished!" Everything pertaining to sin, righteousness, and judgment was finished--accomplished--completed. God the supreme Judge held high court there. There He found and pronounced the whole world guilty before a holy God, for all had sinned and come short of the glory of God. (Rom 3:23)

The crucifixion of Christ is the center of man's complete redemption. There the Holy Spirit targets every area of conviction. There our consciences register the depth of iniquity and the height of holiness--heaven opens there and so does hell. There the penitent receive God's pardon and peace. There the Holy Spirit witnesses with our spirits that we are the children of God when we repent and receive Christ. There by faith we are "born again" of the Spirit. There, by His death, we receive Life--His Life--eternal Life. (John 3)

No wonder there is joy in heaven over one sinner who repents! We sing with new wide-eyed wonder:

Man of sorrows, what a Name
For the Son of God Who came
Ruined sinners to reclaim--
Hallelujah, what a Savior!

SOME SERIOUS QUESTIONS

All of this prompts some very searching questions:

- What ever happened to conviction of sin?
- What ever happened to SIN?
- What ever happened to deep working of the Holy Spirit Who brings about this conviction?
- What ever happened to the praying in churches which brings this powerful working of the Holy Spirit?
- What ever happened to the preaching of the guilt of sin?
- What ever happened to the preaching of repentance which brings this conviction of sin?

In other words, what ever happened to REVIVAL? Especially in churches? Genuine Revival makes it all happen.

REVIVAL IS THE ONLY THING WHICH HAS ALL THE DIMENSIONS FOR ALL THE NEED.

Pentecost did just that--brought it all together. That's why we must stop, look, and listen to what happened on the DAY OF PENTECOST. (Acts 2)

THE DAY OF PENTECOST (Acts 2)

When the Holy Spirit came on the great day of Pentecost, He worked exactly the way Jesus said He would in John 16:7-11.

Though He had spoken so plainly no one had any idea that it would all happen the way it did. There are always some wonderful surprises in any true Revival.

But what a wonderful help it is to know that God sticks to His Word, fulfills His plain promises, and carries through on His unmistakable commands. This is His way, His standard, and He never disappoints. He is so believable. He foreknows, foretells, and follows through on His own pattern. He says what He means, and He means what He says. There are no "Maybe's" or "perhaps" with God. We can rely on Him to stick to His Word.

THIS IS THE PATTERN HE FOLLOWS IN REVIVAL, AND SO MUST WE! We always get stuck when we try to change or improve on His plan! We are not here to tell God what to do. He had told us what He wants to do. And also what He wants us to do.

Prayer, as we have noted, is always primary with God. So the First thing the Holy Spirit did on the day of Pentecost was to come to the "Upper Room" and fill the 120 believers who were together "with one accord in prayer and supplication." (Acts 1:14) He formed the first New Testament church prayer meeting, and answered their tremendous praying with power from on high (Acts 1:2ff) At once Jesus also gives us the Biblical basis for the church "Prayer Meeting." It was not optional! It was a command of Jesus. And it still is! It set the pattern, and paved the way to Pentecost. (Acts 1:4) The prayer meeting is the key to Revival from that day to this--from Jerusalem to all Judea and until Jesus comes again. AND IT IS GOD'S PATTERN FOR REVIVAL EVER SINCE TO THE ENDS OF THE EARTH AND UNTIL JESUS COMES AGAIN! (Acts 1:8)

It was to the disciples headed for this prayer meeting that Jesus said:

But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth. (Acts 1:8)

It was to the disciples headed for this prayer meeting that the two angels appeared and said:

Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven. (Acts 2:11)

Backsliding begins when churches neglect this pattern of prayer and the glory departs. We must repent and get back to this kind of praying.

PENTECOST CAME TO A PRAYER MEETING! We seem to have forgotten this. The 120 members were filled with the Holy Spirit, all and each with a double filling in the grandest display of divine power ever known on earth.

It is important to see that the Holy Spirit did not fall on Jews all around Jerusalem in some kind of a general or promiscuous outpouring. He came right to that praying body in the upper room.

We remember that Jesus had said: ". . . what He has come to YOU." (John 16:7f)

Then what? Then and there came the mighty explosion of the Spirit! First to and then through the new CHURCH. Let's be sure to say, the PRAYING CHURCH. It was on fire for God now and through these Spirit-filled Christians and their witness for Christ thousands of Jews came running together to find out what was happening.

When Peter rose to preach to this mass of Jews, thousands of them were brought under conviction of sin, righteousness, and judgment--to repentance--to conversion--to salvation, exactly as Jesus foretold. (Acts 2:14ff)

Those unconverted Jews were literally pierced in their hearts! ("pricked", stabbed) It is the same word which is used when the Roman soldiers pierced and broke open the heart of Jesus on the Cross. With the deepest conviction of sin they had ever experienced they cried out: "What shall we do?" (Acts 2:37f)

Then Peter preached as he had never preached before! A brand new message. He preached CHRIST the MESSIAH openly for the first time. With a boldness and dynamic he had never known in his life, Peter became the first Revival preacher of the New Testament Church! Here we at once learn the right combination for Revival in a church: first, this same kind of strong praying; and then this same kind of strong preaching.

We must remember, though, that this kind of strong preaching of repentance will never "get through" to people until there is this kind of strong praying.

Jesus had commanded that "repentance and remission of sins is to be preached . . ." (Luke 24:47) Not just "forgiveness" and not just "repentance" but both! Today a tremendous amount of "forgiveness of sins" is being preached without repentance. This is a great weakness today. We have no mandate for that and we get no Revival! It is a great part of our cheap grace "easy believism" and fallen-from-Revival condition in churches today, and we have to repent of it! Change our thinking. Agree with God and do what He tells us to do, for He is the giver of Revival.

On the other hand, I have noticed through the years that strong preaching on repentance without strong praying backfires, or misfires, or there is no fire, only hardening of heart. There must be the right combination and timing, as shown by Peter at Pentecost.

Peter did not only preach "Christ crucified," he preached "Christ whom YOU crucified!" (Acts 2:36) Right in Jerusalem where they crucified Him.

The awakening was so powerful in Jerusalem that thousands of the Jews, guilty of crucifying their Messiah, were convicted, and as many as 3000 of them were converted to Christ and added to the 120-member congregation, **ALL ON THE SAME DAY!**

Three thousand Jews! That shows the enormous new **POWER** of the Holy Spirit, and the way He can work in mighty Revival. It has been said, we can hear 3,000 sermons without anyone getting converted!

The Pentecostal power of the Spirit displayed in the first New Testament congregation in Jerusalem was the greatest force on earth because even the gates of hell cannot prevail against it. (Matt. 16:18)

Everyone knows we need Revival, but now we know what the Revival is which we need. We also know how it is to come, and where, and when.

The Acts (book of Revivals), and the entire New Testament makes it clear that we are to pray for and expect Revival to take place in the CHURCH. Even more definitely, in our **CHURCHES AND CONGREGATIONS**.

Pentecost, after all, came to a local congregation.

The fact is, Pentecost and the "age of the Spirit and of the Church" which it ushered in also brought about a new kind of evangelism - much more powerful than before--much more powerful than Evangelism without a revived, praying, Spirit-empowered **CONGREGATION**.

It is this kind of Evangelism we should be experiencing--churches on fire! This is God's plan. We have a lot of Evangelism today without Revival in our churches, but not this profound kind where the glory of the Lord came down and filled His Church at Pentecost. There we have the true model which the Lord Himself set forth for His Church, and for His Great Commission to the uttermost parts of the earth and to the consummation of the age. (Acts 1:8; Matt. 28:16f.)

The "Great Commission" never even began to be fulfilled (the Lord would not allow it) apart from the "Upper Room" praying Spirit-filled congregation. And He never planned that the task of world evangelization would ever be accomplished and completed in any other way.

Whatever His way was in Jerusalem in the beginning was to be His way for witnessing and reaching through to the "uttermost part of the earth." (Acts 1:8) And we will never finish the task any other way because Jesus gave us no other plan--no "alternate route." It is this kind of Power the churches so easily depart from and to which they must return, back again to their "first love" and "first works."

This is the Revival we need and the Lord Himself blasts his awakening trumpet calling us and our churches to repent and get back to it. (Rev. 1-3)

IT ALL MAKES SENSE

The law of Revival makes real sense. It works out very practically and realistically. For example, in the Church we have both the INSIDERS (Christians) and the OUTSIDERS (non-Christians). So we have two problems: One is first to get the INSIDERS OUT, and the other is to get the OUTSIDERS IN (to Church). It does not make sense for the INSIDERS to pray for the OUTSIDERS to come into our churches if the INSIDERS don't even come out!

But this is what we are up against in "Revival Meetings." Christians have forsaken the assembling of themselves together. (Heb. 10:25) It is one of the signs of our backsliding.

In Revival, as at Pentecost, people love to assemble together. In fact, it is hard to keep them from it. Open the book of Acts and try to count all the different assembly meetings, large and small, which those thousands of Christians attended (Congregation means we must congregate). People hate to miss meetings. Assembling themselves together had priority. It was an expression of their "first love." The Revival became the talk of the town, as we saw in city after city in the Norway Revivals. The family life did not suffer either; in fact, it was blessed as never before. Even the children were raised on "miracle." I believe this is God's plan. It was so even in Moses' day, in the days when the glory of God was revealed from day to day in their midst as it rested on the tabernacle, center of the entire congregation.

When Christians attend meetings for Revival with the enthusiasm they show when they attend ball games or other events we will see the Holy Spirit at work in Power again. It does not make sense to be all alive at ball games and sit in church as if we were dead!

WHEN CHRISTIANS WAKE UP, NON-CHRISTIANS WILL ALSO WAKE UP! That's the "Law."

D. L. Moody said: "You will never see an anxious church without sinners being saved." Late in his career, when churches needed reviving again, Moody was asked the question: "What do you do with live chicks when you have a dead hen? Do you put live chicks under a dead hen? What do you do with new converts when you have dead churches? Do you put live converts in a dead church?" Moody caught on at once, and he was more and more burdened for Revival in the churches in his last years. Get the hen revived! Then it will lay its own eggs, hatch them out, and warm and nurture them. Similarly, a revived church will bear and rear strong converts in renewing power of the Spirit.

That's what happened with the first churches in the Acts. The church was pregnant in prayer, brought forth her own converts, and nurtured them well. We read statements like this: "The LORD added to the CHURCH daily those who were being saved." (Acts 2:47)

I said to Billy Graham early in his ministry: "It is always difficult to win to the churches those not won through the churches." One of the most meaningful aspects of his ministry is

that he activates the churches and gets them heavily involved.

The story is told of an English conqueror who came to a certain place needing money. In the distance, he was told, were a lot of silver statues. When he found out that they were statues of famous saints he shouted, "MELT THE SAINTS DOWN, AND GET THEM IN CIRCULATION!"

That's it! When saints melt together in renewal, love, and prayer, they circulate. "BEND US! BEND THE CHURCH, AND SAVE THE WORLD: was the cry of Evan Roberts and the saints in the powerful Revival in Wales. It is then that the Holy Spirit sends strong conviction of sin, righteousness, and judgment bringing "repentance unto life."

Frank Mangs, the noted Swedish Evangelist, told how his mother (a Christian) used to "preach" to him, but it turned him off. Then one day she came home from a conference and began humbly to confess her own need. Then, he said, he listened. When she began to confess her own need, he said it made him want to confess his.

This is the way of the Lord in Revival, and it makes sense!

II CHRONICLES 7:14

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.

This well-known Scripture spells out the law of Revival plainly, pointedly and practically and yes, perfectly.

Here we are told in clear language where the problem lies. It is not first of all with the "outsiders", as many seem to think when they pray for Revival. It is with the "insiders", God's people. The church is in the world, but now the world has gotten in the church. The water in which the boat is floating has gotten into the leaking boat and it is sinking!

The problem in Revival is not first with those who take the name of the Lord in vain; it is with those who are called by His Name (Christians), and who call upon His name.

Many think first of the mounting sin and iniquity in the land when they pray for Revival; God thinks first of the sins and "wicked ways" of His people. Many are praying for a landslide Revival while they and their churches are backsliding!

Our Lord's first concern in Revival is not the "whitehouse." It is God's house! "Judgment," says Apostle Peter, "must begin at the house of God." (I Peter 4:17)

God has never really had a problem, except with His own people. If He can get them to be what He wants them to be, nothing--not even the devil himself--can stop His mighty working in the world.

God says: if they do four things, He will do three things. God's people must:

(1) ". . .**HUMBLE THEMSELVES**" The first step in Revival is not praying, but humbling ourselves. For "God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble." "Blessed are the poor in spirit," says Jesus, "for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." (James 4:6; I Peter 5:5; Matthew 5:3)

(2) ". . .and **PRAY**" Pride and praying do not go together. Pride says I CAN, and prayer says I CAN'T--GOD MUST DO IT. A humble spirit and a prayer spirit are one spirit.

In Revival God's people humble themselves and often are very broken before God. Then they really pray, because they have the true "Spirit of prayer." Prayer then becomes primary and has priority in their lives. This is a good test of whether Revival is genuine or not.

For example, I've heard Christians pray for "Revival meetings", for people to come to

attend the "special meetings," when all the while they had no intention of attending the meetings themselves! I've heard leaders pray, even at the pulpit for the Lord to be very present and bless "the coming meetings" while they already had made their plans to be absent!

We are reminded of the man who said: I don't just want to send my children to Sunday School, I'm going to take them.

Genuine praying means that we do not ask the Lord to do anything we are not at the same time asking Him to do in and with and through ourselves. When we do that we always get results. One leader said: "Don't do anything you have to confess if Revival comes."

This is so true also when it comes to prayer in our homes, and in our church prayer meetings. How in the world can we ask the Lord to bless our prayer meetings when we have neglected and forsaken them and do not want to get involved?

How can we expect prayer to be answered when we want our own way in life and don't want to change our lifestyles? Can we even call it praying?

Families are breaking up because our prayer altars and family altars are broken down. Husbands and wives break up because they do not break down before God, heed His Word, and pray together. (Matt. 18:19)

It is still true: WHEN THE FAMILY PRAYS TOGETHER AND PLAYS TOGETHER IT STAYS TOGETHER.

It does not take a special prophet to see why there is so little holy Fire in churches. God's fire is altar fire. The altars of prayer are broken down. Like Elijah, Revival begins at the altar of prayer, and in the front seats of the church. If Christians take the back seats who is to fill the seats up front?

A notable minister I knew who experienced precious Revival in several of his congregations often remarked: "I have never seen a Revival in a church with the front seats empty."

If we are "seated together in heavenly places" as Christians, isn't it strange that we don't like to set together in church? We need Revival.

If Christians want front seats at ball games, pay real money for the tickets, and often yell and cheer and even ignore the clock, how is it they want church services to be so dull and often dead? These things change in Revival. Priorities change. Put God and His kingdom first. Prayer and prayer meetings are inviting and become exciting because the Holy Spirit again is strongly present and powerfully at work. Where God is greatly present, His people will be too. It works another way too: when God's people gather, the Lord will be present "in the midst." The outsiders come in when the insiders come out to pray.

(3) ". . .and SEEK my face. . ." Revival praying always intensifies: from ASKING to SEEKING to KNOCKING. They do so with new dedication and diligence: the Lord works intensely when we diligently seek Him. Their faces light up by seeking His face. (Heb. 11:6)

When we put the Lord first--"seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness," other things will be "added" to us. And others will start to seek Him too and will be added to the Lord. How can we expect others to get right with God when we do not seek His righteousness ourselves? If others are to see the light of Christ in us we must walk in it.

The great Revivals have always been characterized by great praying and seeking God. By waiting on Him, often day and night, in prayer. Also by fasting and prayer and by seeking His face until they again see Him.

Revival preachers often prayed many hours a day. They would pray for God's message--pray for people--pray for the Holy Spirit to break through in the message and in the meetings. They paid the price for Revivals and experienced them. The price has not changed. There are no bargain prices in Revival. What it cost for our fathers to pray down their Revivals is still this way--the only way. We must not charge our lack of Revivals to the growing evils of the times, to the "last days" or to certain "prophecy" views, but to our failure in PRAYER.

It's time to say a word also about "protracted meetings" which were so much a part of all Revivals. They are still part of the Revival vocabulary. The fact that we do not hear of them now is another indication of our lack of Revivals. "continuity" is another such word. At and after Pentecost we read,

And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers. And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart, praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved. (Acts 2:42, 46-47)

When Charles G. Finney came to a church or churches in a city he planned to stay there often all winter, believing God to work increasingly in power--and He did! Often the hosts of heaven moved in, and the hosts of hell moved out. What church-transforming and live-changing meetings they were!

In Oslo, Norway the "Revival meetings" continued for years, before the Second World War. In those days churches were led to a starting date but did not set a closing date. If a Revival broke out they would almost pin an Evangelist down! I preached for 10 weeks in one stretch in the Stavanger, Norway Revival! The work of God was the talk of the town. The weeks seemed like days, and the days seemed like hours, because we were living in expectation corner all the time; people were coming "under conviction of sin" and were being converted to Christ all the time, both in the meetings and in other ways in the city.

Why? Because so many Christians were revived, and were seeking the Lord in prayer. The Spirit of prayer permeated the church gatherings, and if no meetings were held on certain nights, many would gather together in homes and hold prayer and praise meetings. The many young people would do the same, because the "Spirit of prayer" (as it was called) was upon them too.

Sinners were seeking the Lord in penitence because Christians were seeking the Lord in prayer for them.

(4) ". . .**TURN FROM THEIR WICKED WAYS. . .**" This sounds strange! Christians, God's people, are to do this? We thought this would apply to the world, the nation, the wickedness all around in the land. Most Christians praying for Revival pray that way: "Send Revival to our needy nation, because "evil men and seducers are waxing-worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived." (2 Tim. 3:13)

In Revival God reverses the order: His judgment begins at the house of God. "Lord, send a Revival, and let it begin **IN ME**" is always the way to pray in Revival. The same sins which are "out there" in the world are now in the church, and Christians have the greater light, through Christ. What we often call "weakness" and excuse God calls "wickedness." He even smites the sin of lukewarmness in the Laodicean church, calling it to immediate repentance. Let's not think His patience and longsuffering are a sign of permissiveness. Jesus says: "If the light which is in you becomes darkness, **HOW GREAT IS THAT DARKNESS.**" The guilt of sin is hardly being preached today. But that does not mean that guilt has changed, or that God has changed His mind about it.

LET'S BE SURE OF THIS

The Word of God is still the word of GOD. Sin is still sin. Righteousness is still righteousness. Judgment is still judgment. Heaven is still heaven. Hell is still hell. God is still holy. Conscience is still conscience. Conviction by the Spirit is still real and it is conviction of sin no matter how much Satan would short-circuit it with his many forms of deception. Repentance is still repentance. Salvation is still salvation. Forgiveness is still forgiveness, and it is forgiveness of sin.

It is still true, men die, and they die in their sins unless they go to the Cross of Christ, repent of their sins, and receive Christ as Savior and Lord.

These four things demonstrate the way the Holy Spirit works Revival in God's people. In 2 Chron. 7:14, God declares that He will do three things, the highest and most glorious of His many blessings:

(1) ". . . THEN I will **HEAR FROM HEAVEN.**" The heavens suddenly open up, and declare the glory of God, when before they seemed "as brass." The "brass" was never in the heavens; it was in the hearts of God's people, and when they deal with their sins, open up fully on them to God, He opens up His heaven. In Wales they called the great Revival(s) "Rent Heavens." In the many Norway Revivals the saying was often heard: "det ligger sa og si i luften" ("it lies, so to speak in the air"). The atmosphere changes, not only in the revived church, but in the community around it. The hosts of heaven move in, and the hosts of hell move out. The Spirit falls and fills. He is poured out, as at Pentecost. Conviction strikes. Repentance is preached. Forgiveness flows. Faith is real, and a peace with God that passes understanding comes to people. Joy unspeakable mingles with the reverential awe of the living God. The Lord God Himself is in the midst of His people, doing His mighty works again. We see the same things happening in the book of Acts. That book comes alive again. **IT IS GOD'S OWN BOOK OF THE CHURCH AND OF CHURCH REVIVALS.**

(2) ". . . I will **FORGIVE THEIR SIN.**" In Revival forgiveness flows from heart to heart. The Lord forgives and forgets, and so do Christians. It is genuine forgiveness because it comes from the Spirit's conviction and repentance. Hurts are healed, wrongs are righted, and tears of joy often flow freely. People who were bound are set free, and the devil is bound. The atmosphere of God's holiness is too much for him, and he flees, at least for a time.

HOW WONDERFUL TO COME INTO THE ATMOSPHERE OF A CHURCH WHICH IS FULL OF PRAYER AND FULL OF THE PRESENCE AND POWER OF THE HOLY SPIRIT!

This is Revival. The GLORY OF THE LORD WHICH HAD DEPARTED NOW RETURNS TO THE CHURCH. That is another way of describing what happens in a Revival.

(3) ". . .will HEAL THEIR LAND." Now we learn another thing. Something very major and very mighty in Revival. We thought the land sorely needed Revival because of its mounting sins and iniquities (and it surely does); but God says it is His PEOPLE who sorely need it because of "their wicked ways."

HOW REVEALING AND REVOLUTIONARY IS THE WAY OF THE LORD IN REVIVAL. HIS WAYS ARE PAST FINDING OUT, except as He reveals them, which He does here.

At last we now come to what we thought was first--the healing of their land. We come to realize that the moral root and the moral rot in the nation will not heal at the government level. It comes through the renewed church.

The state is not the 'salt of the earth." Revived Christians are the salt and staying power of the world's corruption.

Churches on fire for God have been the light of the nations. The leaves of the "Tree of life" are for the "healing of the nations." (Rev. 22:2)

A man once said: "If you take the churches out of the world I wouldn't want to be here." And he quickly added: "You know another thing? I won't be here either. When the church goes, I'm going too."

Revivals have saved nations. The mighty Awakening under George Whitfield and the Wesleys, historians say, saved England from the French Revolution. The Revivals of Norway brought about a new Norway.

GOD'S PLAN IS TO LIGHT UP THE WHOLE WORLD WITH REVIVALS.

How often Revivals have lit up our churches and institutions and have healed our land! He is at work again, watching over His Word to fulfill it again in our churches and in our land.

SOME EXAMPLES

CHARLES G. FINNEY, a giant and apostle in church awakenings writes:

A Revival breaks the power of the world and of sin over CHRISTIANS. It brings them to such vantage ground that they get a fresh impulse towards heaven. They have a new foretaste of heaven and new desires after union with God, and the charm of the world is broken, and the power of sin overcome.

When the churches are thus awakened and reformed, the reformation and salvation of sinners will follow *going through the same stages of conviction, repentance, and reformation*. Their hearts will be broken down and changed. Very often the most abandoned profligates are among the subjects. Harlots and drunkards and infidels, and all sorts of abandoned characters are awakened and converted. The worst among human beings are softened, and reclaimed, and made to appear as lovely specimens of the beauty of holiness. (Revival Lectures.) Italics mine

Today, when we often have a lot of Evangelism with little Revival in the churches, it is important to hear something else which Finney learned:

When I was an Evangelist I labored in a church that had enjoyed many Revivals, and it was the easiest thing in the world to get the church to go out and bring in sinners to the meetings, and the impenitent would come in and hear, *but there was no deep feeling in the church*. The minister saw that this way of proceeding was ruining the church, and that each such Revival made the converts more and more superficial, and unless we came to a stand, and got more sanctification in the church, we would defeat our object. So we began to preach with that in mind, and the church members writhed under it. The preaching ran so directly across their former notions about the way to promote Revival that some of them were quite angry. They would run around and talk, but would do nothing else. But after a terrible state of things many of them broke down and became as humble and teachable as little children. (Ibid.) Italics mine

J. WILBUR CHAPMAN. Another leading Evangelist of his time in our country in the early part of the 1900's. He saw this law at work constantly in his many years of great meetings. He says:

The reason why the unsaved do not attend is largely due to the fact that the Christians have forsaken the services themselves; and it is always a principle that the unsaved are only as much concerned for themselves as the saved are concerned for them.

WILLIAM P. NICHOLSON. The famous Irish Evangelist was to Ireland what Finney was to America. He had very powerful Revivals all over Ireland. Churches and communities were transformed. He told me more than once that it was his custom to preach at least 6 weeks at

a time in "protracted meetings" in churches in Ireland. He would preach first to the professing Christians for at least three weeks, to wake them up, get them to repent, be revived and on fire for God, and into strong praying. THEN, he said, when the church got on fire "we went to town." Sinners of all kinds would come under conviction of sin and penitently turn to Christ.

EVAN ROBERTS. Roberts was the leader of the famous Wales Revival (1904-5). His oft-repeated prayer was: "BEND US, LORD. BEND THE CHURCH, AND SAVE THE WORLD." Thousands did bend in prayer. In that awakening the churches and chapels all up and down the principality of Wales were full of people, full of prayer, full of prayer-meetings, full of new cleansing and purity, full of power, and full of praise and song and worship.

Again, the "law of Revival" was revived. God renewed the Christians and the churches of the land, and multitudes of sinners of all kinds were converted.

This is the book of Acts kind of Christianity--the kind Jesus planned for His Church.

JONOTHAN GOFORTH. He was an outstanding missionary and a front leader in Revivals in China and Korea. Finney's "Revival Lectures" challenged him, and soon changed his ministry. He tells his story like this: "If Finney is right, then I am going to find out the laws governing spiritual harvest and obey them no matter what it costs." Some months later a missionary loaned him the full autobiography of Finney. "It is impossible" says Goforth,

to estimate what that book meant to me. Immediately, as I put into practice all that God was teaching me of the Holy Spirit, I began to see evidence of greater power and spiritual results from my ministry. At one of the first meetings conviction swept over the whole audience. All of us who were involved in the meeting were too awed to say anything. One of the Evangelists spoke for us all: 'Brethren, He for whom we have prayed for so long was here in very deed tonight. But let us be sure that if we are to retain His presence we must walk very carefully.'

His book By My Spirit tells his remarkable story of Revivals and also his smaller booklet Revival in Korea. (1907)

I met Dr. Goforth when he was 70. He was blind then, preaching on Revival to the students of Nyack College. His wife was looking for someone to lead him to the college chapel. It was one of those big moments in my life, as we walked arm in arm over to the chapel, past the grave of Dr. A. B. Simpson. Somewhere there I asked him a big question: "Dr. Goforth, what is the greatest need of the church today?" Patting my hand, he quickly replied: "The Holy Spirit--the Holy Spirit--the Church hardly knows the Holy Spirit."

I have not forgotten it.

DR. W. GRAHAM SCROGGIE. Let's hear from another giant of the Lord. I heard Dr. Scroggie preach when he was pastor of Spurgeon's Tabernacle in London. This was the original

Tabernacle, before the war, and very beautiful. His vision of Revival was clear as crystal. In God's Call to the Church he writes:

What is needed more than anything else at the present time is a world-wide and heaven-sent Revival, a Revival which shall be marked by conviction of sin and genuine repentance, by a living faith in God and His Word, by renewed devotion to the Person of Christ, by a truer and wider fellowship among His people, by a more constant practice of prevailing prayer, by a deeper concern for the perishing souls of men, by a more joyous Christian testimony, and by more daring enterprises for the Kingdom of God, motivated and made dynamic by the Cross. That is our need. We have placed our trust and hope in many things that have failed us. We too long have passed by the secret of our strength, and we shall have to turn at last from the very best efforts of man to the God with whom is not only the will to bless, but the power.

DR. R. W. DALE. This famous preacher and theologian in England writes about the difference in preaching which developed, and which no longer produced conviction of sin:

It is my impression that . . . the difference between the way in which we think of Divine forgiveness and the way in which it was thought of by David and Isaiah, by Christ Himself, by Peter, Paul, and John, by the saints of all Christian churches in past times, both in the East and in the West . . . by leaders of the Evangelical Revival in the last century--the difference, I say, between the way in which we think of it is very startling. The difference is so great, it affects so seriously the whole system of the religious thought and life, that we may be said to have invented a new religion. THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN OUR RELIGION AND THE RELIGION OF OTHER TIMES IS THIS: WE DO NOT BELIEVE GOD HAS ANY STRONG RESENTMENT AGAINST SIN OR AGAINST THOSE WHO ARE GUILTY OF SIN. And since His resentment has gone, His mercy has gone with it. We have not a God who is more merciful than the God of our fathers, but a GOD WHO IS LESS RIGHTEOUS, a God who does not glow with fiery indignation against sin . . .

PROFESSOR G. G. FINDLAY, in his commentary on Ephesians writes that we need to consider "whether we are not fabricating for ourselves another Gospel--one without the piercing sense of shame and ruin involved in human sin."

DIETRICH BONHOFFER searches all of us in his insightful writing about "cheap grace." Forgiveness of sin is preached right and left without repentance. Conviction of sin hardly enters the picture. Many do pray for Revival, but seem to want Revival without the praying and the prayer meetings which bring it. It will not happen!

In the "old-time Revival meetings" the Holy Spirit often worked very powerfully. He would "strive" with people, bringing them under conviction of sin. And the holiness of God would often penetrate the minds and the meeting. Reverential awe was felt. People were afraid it might be their "last call," and were made to know that the "Spirit will not always strive with

man." The so-called "anxious seat" and the "altar call" and "inquiry room" came into being to meet these needs.

We have gained a lot of new ground in our time. But we have also lost a lot of good old ground. And that is what God calls us back to when He cries REPENT all through the Scriptures.

D. L. MOODY'S RECIPE FOR REVIVAL

To those who have lost the way into Revival and want to find their way back, D. L. Moody is another giant who knew the way. He writes:

The best way is for the Pastor to say he wants to see all who desire the work of Revival. Don't let anyone else come. Then get down on your knees and pour out your hearts asking God to revive YOURSELVES. Don't be in a hurry to pray for your friends. Hold the people to THEMSELVES. You never see an anxious church without souls being saved. Don't wait for the whole church to move. Get two or three, and soon there will be six or seven. Form a praying band for the work, and the blessing will come. That plan never failed yet.

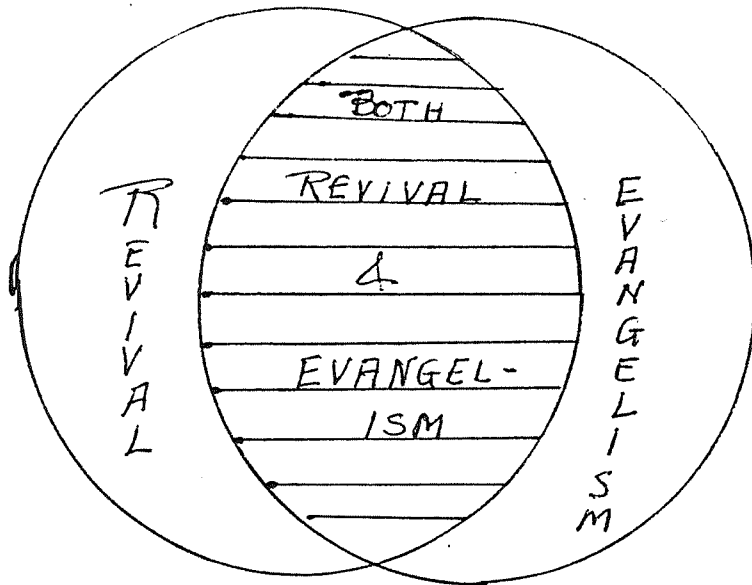
God is doing it again--raising up new leaders to quicken Prayer and Revival in His Church.

When we in the churches do again what God tells us to do, their holy fire will light up our communities for God and bring healing to our land.

DIAGRAMS

How it How the "law of Revival" in churches
relates to Evangelism and soul-winning

Its dynamic can be charted like this;



- These 2 circles illustrate the law of Revival
- They can be widened or narrowed in on each other
- Either way they illustrate that the amount of Revival and Power in the CHURCH relates to and determines the amount of Evangelism and soul-winning that takes place. Also the depth of it. The "texture" of it, so to speak

- And when the 2 circles come fully into one, as at Pentecost, you have the greatest possible Evangelism through the greatest and most powerful working of the Spirit of Revival in the CHURCH.

- The Revival circle (above) pertains to the CHURCH
- The Evangelism circle pertains to the unchurched, the outsiders, the non-Christians who are to be evangelized and won to Christ.

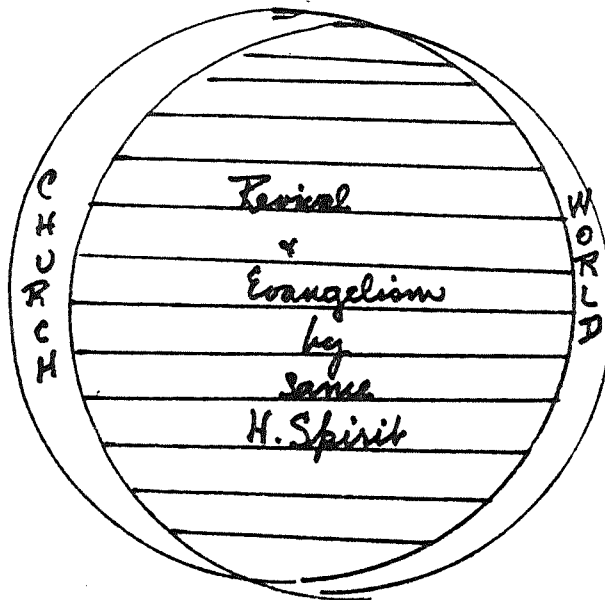
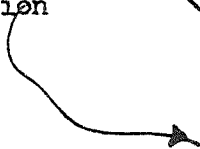
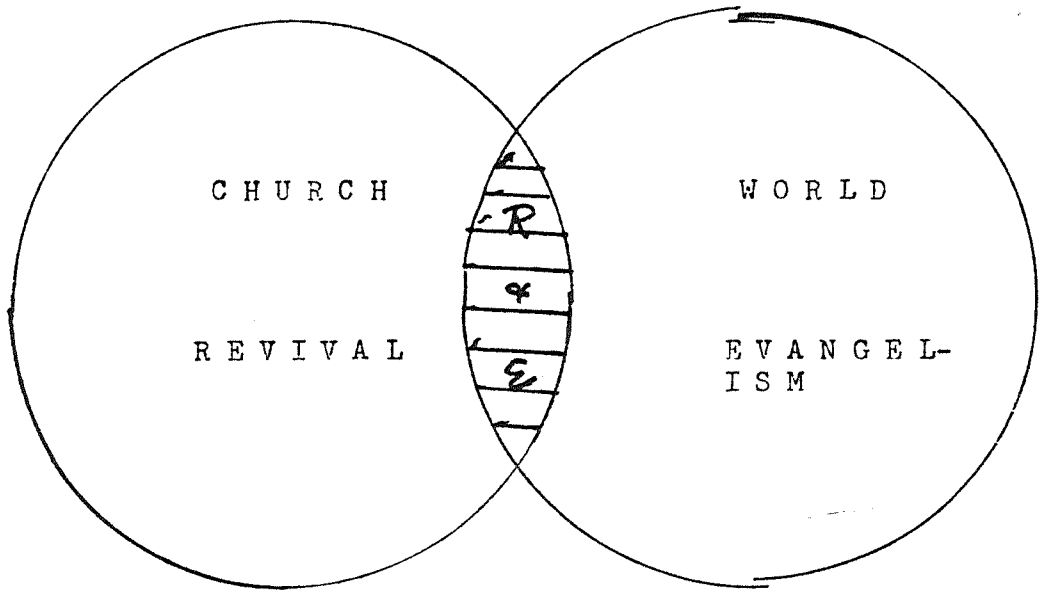
- In the Acts (Book of Revivals) they are not only won to Christ, but are won and added to the CHURCH.

- Won to the church because won through the church.

LAW OF REVIVAL spells out the relation to REVIVAL & EVANGELISM
in a Congregation/ Church & the World

Pictures the small amount of both Revival & Evangelism.

In a Church there is always a relation between the reviving & renewing of Christians and Evangelism with its winning of people to Christ in conversion



This diagram shows that when a Church is full of prayer and Revival and the Spirit, as at Pentecost, the evangelism and its soul-winning is at capacity

