

Why Do We NOT Pray for Revival?

Geoffrey R. Kirkland

Christ Fellowship Bible Church

Looking at the Word of God, examples abound of saints praying that God would bring revival. Church history echoes similar prayers from men and women who gave God no rest in asking Him to arouse Himself, arise, take His hand out of His bosom, and bring revival. And He answered. *But why have we not prayed for revival?*

Perhaps a few of the reasons can be mentioned below.

1. Unbelief

How shameful it is to admit but could it be that Christians do not pray for revival because there is this prevailing thought that God *cannot* do it. Of course our theology tells us He *can* do it. After all, he is God. But we have not seen it. There could be this lingering thought of disbelief. Sadly, God could do it but things are so bad and so corrupt and so idolatrous that the horrendous thought may enter one's mind: "*could* God really bring revival?" This strikes at the heart of unbelief and this may be another reason why some do not pray for revival.

2. Ignorance

Many have never been taught to pray for revival. Many have never been part of a church that diligently and intentionally prayed for God to rend the heavens and come down. Many Christians are ignorant; they have not been taught; they've never seen it done and thus, they don't pray for it.

3. Fear of the unknown

What if God actually answers the prayer and *does* bring revival? Imagine what will happen! Imagine the needs that the church would have to fill — discipleship, encouragement, hospitality, growth, membership, etc. There may be a fear of the unknown that could prompt believers to neglect praying for revival.

4. Disassociation with the charismatic stigma

Some simply tag revival with the Pentecostal/Charismatic movement. When some hear of revival, they automatically lump it with the camp of planned 'revival meetings,' manmade efforts to concoct a revival at the whim of a church, preacher, or an evangelist. Could it be that a disassociation with the charismatic stigma has caused some to not pray for revival.

5. Never seen it

Because someone has never seen a revival, perhaps they think it can't happen. Of course it did in the book of Acts but that was then. And, indeed, it happened in the Great Awakening of the 18th century but that was then. We have not seen one in the recent past. Perhaps theology is being based on experience rather than the other way around — as it ought to be. This could, sadly, be a reason why some neglect to storm the throne of God begging Him for revival.

6. Don't want it

Some simply do not want revival. They enjoy church and do not want the boat to be rocked. They enjoy the few who show and sadly, sinfully, and selfishly, don't want others to be saved, come, join, and serve. Some folks forget that it is *Christ's* church — not their church. The church will never be owned by a person, a pastor, an evangelist, a hero, or a group. Jesus Christ alone has been, is currently, and will be the only Head of His Church. Those who do not want revival of course will not pray for revival.

7. Lack of love for the lost

How common it is for believers to lack a genuine love for the lost and thus refuse to share Christ with them. How distressing it is to realize that many professing evangelicals concern themselves with tolerance and open-mindedness rather than pitying the lost in their damnable estate apart from Christ and praying fervently, ferociously, and faithfully that God would awaken their souls to new life. Revival brings regeneration, repentance, reconciliation, renewal, and a resolution to follow Christ. Those who lack love for the lost will not be those who faithfully pray for revival.

8. Too comfortable in our church & don't want change

Church often turns into the idol of tradition. Many have their music and their pews. Many have their parking spots and their groups. Many have their friends and no more. Many have a ministry and shun change. But these can all quickly and subtly turn into selfish cravings stuck in the rut of self-idolized church where Jesus Christ is not worshiped; rather, man's wishes and comforts are exalted. These people surely do not pray for revival because revival brings change. It brings new fresh, regenerated blood. It brings excitement. It brings the call to evangelize, the plea for passion, the urgency of proclamation, and the willingness to sacrifice. These refuse to pray for revival.

9. Enjoying the 'present distractions of this world' — caught up in the 'thorns'

How many professing believers find themselves perennially distracted by the 'thorns' of this world. The worries of the world, the deceitfulness of riches, the desires for other things, and the pleasures of this life choke out the desire to see revival, renewal, and regeneration. The love for this world chokes a passion for revival. In fact, the opposite is also true. The hatred of this corrupt world fuels a passion for revival. Those who see the emptiness in this world, the vanity of worry, the folly of loving and pursuing riches, wealth, comforts, and ease, and those who religiously pursue the pleasures of men find themselves ignoring altogether the passionate praying to God for revival. They do not want revival — how could they? They enjoy this world too much and would cringe at change — or their passions, cravings, and lusts going away. Those who see the discouraging state of the professing church, the crippling comforts of westernized Christianity, and the destructive road of worldly passions that many pursue are truly those who should pray for revival. But those enjoying the distractions of the world, caught up in the thorns, and enjoying the ease of life, living for the *now*, are those who do not pray for revival.