



WHAT IS REVIVAL?

What follows is an edited compilation of materials on revival gained primarily from conversations with David Mains, formerly of Chapel of the Air, reflecting research identifying common elements of significant historical revivals. I have taken liberty with David's original materials and amended them in minor ways to reflect my own research and thoughts on the subject. –Alec Rowlands

Definition of Revival

Revival is the **overwhelming sense of God's Presence...** that falls **powerfully** on a **Christian people** who have become dead and lethargic in their spiritual life... **reviving** those elements of the Christian life that **God intended to be normal** for His Church.

Characteristics of Revival

When God's overwhelming Presence falls on His people there are seven characteristics of revival that seem to be common to all of the major awakenings.

1. The **fear of the Lord** among believers results in **deep conviction** of sin and **repentance**.
2. **Worship** becomes spontaneous, joyous and authentic.
3. The **Word of God** comes alive among believers resulting in **renewed obedience** to God.
4. A new **love** for one another result in relationships among believers being restored.
5. All revived believers exercise their **ministry gifts** inside and outside of the church.
6. Authentic personal and corporate **prayer ministry** is revived.
7. Revived believers are a **powerful witness** and unbelievers are strikingly converted, significantly impacting everyday life in the community-at-large.





Stages Of Revival

In addition to identifying the nature of revival, there appears to be a certain sequence of events common to these visitations of God.

1. In a day when the forces of evil are blatant, a sense of **deep dissatisfaction** begins to mark certain of God's people.
2. Within a core group, a vision comes alive regarding what could be, a protracted **ministry of prayer is started**.
3. In this setting of prayer, God richly anoints the **gifts of the Spirit** and an overwhelming sense of **conviction** is felt.
4. Believers experience **forgiveness of sins** plus a new spirit of **victory**, and non-believers are **strikingly converted**.
5. This special sense of the **Presence of the Lord** has a way of spreading **very rapidly**.
6. A renewed commitment to ministry on the part of all true Christians results in **great social benefit**.





7. If possible, **pray in the same theme**. The flow of a prayer meeting is best experienced when those present are attuned to what the Spirit is doing in that prayer meeting and how He is leading the person or persons who have just prayed. Nothing will kill the spirit of prayer faster than "pin ball" prayers, binging from this topic to that topic in rapid succession. The focus of prayer may change in the course of a prayer meeting, but the more gradual that change is, the easier for the people to stay in agreement.
8. Corporate prayer is **not for...**
 - **sharing a testimony**. While testimonies have a place in building faith, they can be a distraction for those gathered for prayer.
 - **giving a devotional thought** or exhortation. Those have their place in a different setting. The people present have to "set aside" their heart of prayer to listen and process a teaching.
 - **telling a story**. We are here to pray, and the best thing you can do for the prayer meeting is to pray.
 - **reading long passages of Scripture** in your prayer.
9. Charles Finney, 19th century revivalist in New England, said that prayers should be **offered with a warmth of spirit** in keeping with the urgency of our need for God to act on our behalf and the confidence that He does and will answer prayer.
10. Prayer in a corporate prayer meeting must be **offered in a volume that everyone present is able to hear** and be able to be in agreement. Unless microphones are available, this will require the people praying to significantly increase volume way above what they usually think of as conversational volume. This is critical for maintaining a spirit of prayer.

