

# “Lord, East Texas Needs Revival!”

Pastor E. Keith Hassell

East Texas needs revival. That's right, good ole East Texas needs revival. I did *not* say that East Texas needs to hold more revival *meetings*, for we can no more hold revival than we can hold a tornado. Meetings are good if they are designed to help us pursue revival, but what we have experienced in revival meetings thus far has done little to convince us of our need to return to God. The reality is, East Texas is sin sick and people know it. Behind the veneer of the “good ole boy” mentality, there is a rottenness that is becoming harder and harder to hide. That rottenness includes alcoholism, drug dealing, and drug abuse. It shows up in the home as incest, sexual abuse, violence, physical and verbal abuse. Extramarital affairs are the shame of East Texas leading to separation, divorce, and custody battles. Gossip and verbal character assassination are still the acceptable sins of our area. It has been said that the grapevine in among East Texans is faster than any form of media. Indeed we thrive on the sewage of life. Prejudice is still “fashionable” among East Texans. Teenage pregnancy is higher here than in most areas. So is abortion. Our teens are turning to drugs, alcohol, gangs and even the occult. East Texans have actually begun to be afraid of the next generation. Children and teachers alike are afraid to go to school. Drive by shootings, carjacking and random killing makes no one safe. No one knows when the next disgruntled employee may walk into a business for a grand exit on life. Pornographic literature, computer downloads, and X-rated movies have found a growing market in good ole East Texas while adultery and fornication are thought to be okay as long as you don't get caught. Homosexuality has become nothing more than an alternative lifestyle. The tide of sin has grown so fast that we no longer think in terms of a cure, we have simply resigned ourselves to sin management. We have tried to educate, moderate, and even throw money at the problem, all to no avail.

Sadly we have churches on almost every street corner. We are religious people in East Texas. Almost everyone claims to be a “Christian.” Why then aren't things different? Billy Graham has said, “Never before in history has so many made so little difference.” The prophet Jeremiah declared, “Is there no balm in Gilead?” The indictment of the prophet was, “The people of God are sick. There is balm in Gilead to cure their disease. Why then has no one made the effort to bring it?” East Texas Christians are sick and weak. We have lost the power and influence to change our society. Jesus is the only cure for the sickness in East Texas. Jesus may not be “politically correct,” but we've tried politics. In fact, we've tried just about everything. We need revival. We must cry out, “Lord, East Texas needs revival!” When revival comes, it will cure the church and change our lives forever.

## **The Need for Revival**

Before East Texas can be saved, the church must first acknowledge her need of revival. The church is God's lampstand in a dark generation. When the church ceases to be the light, great is the darkness! Revival is the result of God's backslidden people repenting of their sin and returning in full devotion to Him. The church must admit that its backslidden condition has allowed sin to breed in our

society. She has not been the salt and the light. If the church were to stand before the Judge of the universe, the charges against us might be as follows:

1. We have disregarded His lordship in our lives and lived according to the selfish desires of our own heart (Matthew 7:21-27; Luke 6:46)
2. We no longer walk in the fear of the Lord or strive to be holy as He is holy (I Peter 1:16-17)
3. We no longer esteem the Word of God as the final standard for determining right and wrong. We have substituted the philosophies and reasoning of this age for the eternal wisdom of God (Isaiah 5:20)
4. We worship God with our lips but our hearts are far from Him, teaching as doctrines the commandments of men (Matthew 15:1-9)
5. We have a form of godliness but deny His right and power to operate in and through their lives (2 Timothy 3:5)
6. We are unfamiliar with our God and are unable to discern His voice and activities (Luke 19:41-46)
7. The church, the bride of Christ, has prostituted herself with the world's system of values, priorities, and methods instead of preparing herself for the wedding feast at Christ's second coming (Ephesians 5:25-27)
8. God's house is not known as a "House of prayer for all nations," but has become a center for man's activities and corruptions (Matthew 21:13)
9. Many leaders remain in personal sin and willful disobedience (Jeremiah 23)
10. Many leaders are promoting and walking after visions of their own heart and not speaking a true word from God (Jeremiah 23)
11. Many leaders still seek the honor and approval of their associates and congregations rather than the honor and approval of Almighty God (John 5:44)
12. Many leaders still whitewash sin and speak a message of "Peace, peace" to a generation which must repent before a holy God (Jeremiah 6:14)
13. We have allowed our love for others and the lost turn cold (Matthew 24:12)
14. We have taken the Lord's name in vain through using His name in profanity and also by claiming His name while living a life that discredits His name (Exodus 20:7)
15. We have left our first love (Revelation 2:4)
16. We have made the Lord a stranger in His own house (Revelation 3:20)
17. We have not come out from among the world to be a separate people unto the Lord. We are guilty of the same sins and perversions as the world. We "worship" the same idols as the world. Our hands are defiled from touching the unclean thing (2 Corinthians 6:17)
18. We have neglected the assembling of ourselves together in the Lord's house (Hebrews 10:25)
19. We have allowed racial and denominational prejudice to divide the body of Christ (Ephesians 4:4-6; I John 2:9-11; 3:10-15; 4:7-11, 17-21)
20. We have allowed foolish and ignorant disputes among ourselves to mar the witness of Jesus to the world and to give Satan access to destroy Christian fellowship and unity (John 13:34-35; 2 Timothy 2:23-26)
21. Because of our sin and impurities, God is bringing judgment on America and on His church by removing His hedge of protection and giving us over to the consequences of our sin (Isaiah 5)

22. Unless we repent, the severity of God's judgment will intensify with each passing day as He has already begun to pour out His wrath in turning us over to the curse (Deuteronomy 28:15ff; Ezekiel 7:1-14; Joel 1)

America, East Texas and the church are deserving of God's judgment. God has been merciful. It has been said that if God does not judge America then He will have to apologize to Sodom and Gomorrah. The reality is that judgment has already begun. All we have to do is look around and we will see that our society is eaten up with the cancer of sin. With all of our technological advancements, our society has no moral or spiritual foundation to direct them. Instead of benefiting us, our advancements only make it easier for sin to penetrate our culture and make Armageddon a real possibility in our lifetime. We are guilty before God and the Judge of the universe must do what is right by bringing judgment. Only the blood of Jesus and the mercy of God can spare us. Instead of judgment, may we pray that God would have mercy and send revival?

### **The Promise of Revival**

Is it possible for America to experience revival rather than judgment? Some have felt there is no alternative than for God to judge our nation. Indeed, the sentence against us has already been sent forth. The execution of God's judgment is taking place even now on our society. How much more severe these judgments become depend upon our response to these judgments. Will we repent? Like Nineveh in the days of Jonah, the God of mercy can change His mind if we will heed the charges against us and repent. Although God executes justice and judgment, it is His higher nature to be merciful to those who will take heed and repent.

I believe God has promised revival in the last days before His return. God has promised to send the former and the latter rain to His people, i.e. a mighty outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon His people to overcome a resurrection of worldwide paganism and one world order (Hosea 6:1-3, 10-12; Joel 2:23-32; Acts 2:16-21). *“So shall they fear the name of the Lord from the west, and His glory from the rising of the sun. When the enemy (Satan) comes in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord will lift up a standard against him”* (Isaiah 59:19). This does not mean that the world will be converted to God. Indeed the world system will grow more and more wicked. But God has a plan of revival for His people. Isaiah 60:1-3 says, *“Arise, shine; for your light has come! And the glory of the Lord is risen upon you. For behold, darkness shall cover the earth, and deep darkness the people; But the Lord will arise over you, and His glory will be seen upon you. The Gentiles shall come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your rising.”* God foretold that great spiritual darkness and revival of God's people will take place simultaneously in the last days.

God has promised to judge and cleanse His church before He returns in order that she will not be condemned with the world (I Corinthians 11:32; I Peter 4:17). The world scoffs at the church when its hidden sins and weaknesses are exposed. Little do they realize that God will cleanse His church *before He judges the world*. When God cleans up His church, the world will be judged next! Revival must come in order that the church will escape the wrath of God and be ready for Christ's return.

God has told us that as it was in the days of Noah, so it will also be before the coming of the Lord (Matthew 24:39). Before God destroyed the earth in the days of Noah, He had Noah to prepare an ark for the salvation of his household and a remnant of His creation (Genesis 6). Even so now God is calling a people out of this world unto Himself before the judgment of God by fire (2 Peter 3).

God has promised revival to those who will meet His conditions. In 2 Chronicles 7:14 the Lord promised, *“If My people who are called by My name will humble themselves, and pray and seek My face, and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin and heal their land.”* The question is not, “Is it God's will to bring revival?” but rather, “Are we willing to meet the conditions for revival?” I believe that East Texas can have revival if we have not become so hardened that we feel we can live without it.

Another reason I believe it is God's will to bring revival here to East Texas is because of what I felt God speak to my heart. In 1984, while living in another state, I felt the Lord say that He was going to bring revival to East Texas. While in prayer God allowed me to hear the hearts of people who were crying out, “We are so dry and thirsty! Lord, there must be more!” They were tired of dry religion. They were looking for something real. God told me that even though people were crying out for revival, it would not be popular with everyone. He would offer revival to the established churches even though not all would receive it. I know that East Texas has many fine churches and pastors who love God. East Texas is made up of good people and many religious people, but being good and being religious hasn't helped us. East Texas needs revival. I believe God will bring revival to those in East Texas who desire and prepare themselves to receive it when it comes.

### **What Is Revival?**

It is important that we know what revival is lest we fail to recognize it when it comes and, thereby, reject it. Past revivals have been legitimized by our history books now, but at the time they were not without controversy and even outright attack by prominent Christian leaders of the day. Human beings have a tendency to sanitize past revivals and demonize current revivals. The reason for this seems to be due to a misunderstanding of what revival is.

What will revival look like when it comes? I have been a student of past and present revivals for years. I have hungered to see a genuine revival come to America, and more specifically, to East Texas. I have attended genuine revivals, been touched by revival, and have experienced a measure of revival in the church I pastor. Before I talk about what revival is, it might be best to first state what revival is *not*.

Revival is not about scheduling revival meetings and bringing in a top notch evangelist and singing group. Revival is not about numbers. Revival is not about new facilities. Revival is not about building a name for a certain church or denomination. Revival is not about church growth. Revival is not about praise and worship. Revival is not about miracles, signs, and wonders. Revival is not about spiritual gifts. Revival is not about strange manifestations. Revival is not about emotionalism or hype. Revival is not about crusading against heretics, bashing sinners, or even saving sinners. Revival is not about doing good deeds. None of these things are wrong in and of themselves, but they are not revival. In fact, emphasis on these things can distract us from true revival. It seems that we are good at doing all of the above, and yet, the church is in the worst moral and spiritual shape it has been in for a long time. God is not impressed. The world is not impressed. It seems the only ones impressed with us *is us!* We need a fresh understanding of revival.

## **Revival begins with God's people.**

*"If My people who are called by My name..."* It seems that one of the greatest road blocks to revival is our perception that "revival" is a series of meetings to save sinners rather than to "revive" the saints. We schedule "revival" meetings and then preach to the lost. A couple of people get saved and we go out saying we had a good revival. Did we? Was the church set aflame for God? Did believers repent of their conformity to the world? Did the church become energized to take the gospel to the people outside the walls of the building?

I wonder what would happen if our churches scheduled meetings *to seek God until the fire of revival fell?* That would be different! Why can't we do that? We can if we realize that revival is not the need of sinners, it is the need of *God's backslidden people*. Only *vived* people can be *re-vived*! God says, *"If My people who are called by My name will humble themselves, and pray and seek My face, and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin and heal their land."* (2 Chronicles 7:14). Of course, the second greatest road block to revival seems to be convincing good people that they are backslidden! It is easy to convince sinners that they need to be saved, but it is harder to convince good people that they are backslidden. Why? They think being good makes them right with God. Hell will be full of *good* people who do not know or love God! However, once we admit our need, we can begin to walk this pathway of revival. God is calling for His people to return to Him.

## **Revival is a return to humility.**

*"If My people...will humble themselves."* The Bible tells us that *"God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble"* (James 4:6). We have been a proud generation. We have learned to live without God. We have even learned how to have church without God! We boast of knowledge, but we do not have the power or the presence of God. Professing ourselves to be wise, we have become fools. Revival begins with humility. Humility is turning away from pride and acknowledging our need and complete dependence upon God.

## **Revival is a return to prayer.**

*"If My people...will pray."* Our prayer life is a direct pulse of our relationship to God. Prayer reflects our love for God. Even in our churches the same holds true. Today the common midweek "Prayer Meetings" in most churches are usually that in name only. Pastors are afraid to conduct prayer meetings lest attendance drop. The vote from the pew has been "Nay" on prayer. Prayer meetings have been the least attended meetings of the church. People do not place a priority on prayer. Yet Jesus said, *"My house shall be called a house of prayer."* (Matthew 21:13). We have made the church a house of great preaching, of great teaching, of great singing, of great dramas, of great fellowship, rather than a house of prayer. I wonder if Jesus would have to come into our churches today to "clean house" and make prayer a priority again. Satan is not afraid of a prayer-less church. But all hell will tremble when the church begins to pray. When revival comes, prayer will reclaim its place as the most important dimension of church life. Revival will come as God's people "pray the price for revival."

## **Revival is seeking God's face.**

*"If My people...will seek My face."* What does it mean to seek the face of God? Jacob sought the face of God and wrestled with Him until the blessing came. Seeking God's face means to take hold of God until He reveals Himself in our behalf. It comes when our

strength and power are useless, and we seek the counsel and favor of God. It comes when we are determined to take hold of God no matter what the cost. God rewards those who diligently seek Him (Hebrews 11:6).

### **Revival is repentance.**

*"If My people...will turn from their wicked ways..."* Repentance is more than regret or sorrow. Anyone can feel regret or sorrow due to the consequences of sin. That does not bring lasting change. Repentance is changing our attitude toward sin in such a way that we turn away from our sin and unto God. Genuine repentance is evidenced not by words or prayers, but by corresponding actions, i.e. we stop doing wrong and start doing right. Revival will always result in the repentance of sin to live a holy life unto God.

### **Revival is returning to God's Word.**

God's Word is to be our final authority in matters of truth, life, and salvation. People have departed from God's Word and looked to human reasoning, education, other religions, and human opinion. Some within the church have drifted from God's Word and trusted in the traditions of men, their favorite preachers and teachers, religious books, prophecies, and the like rather than the Word of God. God's Word alone contains the roadmap back to God.

### **Revival is a sword.**

Revival divides. By nature it has to divide. It demands that we make a choice for God or for ourselves. Before coming to East Texas, I heard the Lord say that He was going to bring division---a division between light and darkness, and between the living and the dead. He said that His people have been living in the graveyard so long that no one knew the difference between the living and the dead any longer.

Revival removes dead tissue from healthy tissue in the body. No one likes surgery, but if dead flesh is not removed, gangrene will set up in the body. Revival divides life from death, truth from error, sin from lawlessness, wheat from tares, humility from pride, righteousness from wickedness, good from evil, purity from impurity, godliness from ungodliness, true worship from religion, clean from unclean, etc.

Revival is when Jesus, the Prince of peace, comes with a sword to divide those who will follow Him with abandonment from those who love the honor and approval of this world. Jesus said, *"Do not think that I came to bring peace on earth. I did not come to bring peace but a sword. For I have come to set a man against his father, a daughter against her mother, and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law; and a man's enemies will be those of his own household. He who loves father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me. And he who loves son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me. And He who does not take his cross and follow after Me is not worthy of Me. He who finds his life will lose it, and he who loses it for My sake will find it."* (Matthew 10:34-39) The peace which Jesus offers to mankind comes with a price. There is a war for the souls of men. Satan is the adversary and deceiver who has blinded the minds of men. Jesus, the Light, came into the world to overcome the darkness. Jesus fought the ultimate battle when He went to the cross. Then Jesus rose victorious. Now we are called to take sides in the battle for revival in the land. The battle is not against flesh and blood (Ephesians 6:12) but against spiritual enemies of revival who blind the eyes of men.

### **Revival comes at a price.**

Revival may cost us church members, finances, ostracism in the community and sometimes a church split. But when we have done all we can do to be a peace maker, yet people will not get right with the Prince of Peace, do we have any sane option other than to pursue revival at any cost? Is there any other cure for lukewarm and corrupt religion without embracing the scalpel of God's sword? Jesus is clear about one thing, there is no compromise. We are either for Him or against Him. We are either hot or cold. We must embrace the sword if we are to embrace revival.

No matter what people may feel or think about revival, how they accept or reject revival, those whom God has touched must persevere for the sake of those who do not now understand or see. Revival has a price. It will cost us, our families, and our churches. If it does not cost us our lives, it will at least cost us our *lifestyles*.

### **Revival will be misunderstood.**

Revival always comes through vessels full of zeal. But zeal for the Lord is usually interpreted as pride, anti-establishment and anti-tradition. Jesus drove out the money changers from the temple because of His zeal for the Lord's house. He challenged things that were wrong and some didn't like it, especially those who had an interest in power, control, and profit.

### **Revival will break our hearts for the ones we love.**

Revival will at times divide family members. It will divide dear friends. People comment, "What has happened to you? Have you gone weird? Don't tell me you are going to be one of those Jesus freaks!" People will do anything and everything to try to get you to turn back. If you do not, they usually distance themselves from you. Are we willing to embrace revival even if it costs us misunderstanding with those we love? Ties with family and friends are powerful influences in East Texas. They should be up to a point. But God never intended that allegiance to family and friends be placed above devotion to Him. We cannot love others *more* than Him.

### **Revival is a time of spiritual hunger.**

Revival comes when God stirs a hunger in His people for Him so that they feel and know that they cannot live without Him. Revival is the reward of desperate people. They cry out in desperation, repenting of pride and self-sufficiency, of living their lives without the direct Lordship of Christ in every decision they make, of doing God's work their way both inside and outside the church, defiling their lives with constant sin and rebellion that they know to be inconsistent with a godly life, and for seeking God's hand instead of His face. To seek God's face means that we lay aside our preconceived plans and ideas about God and return to a complete dependence upon God's Spirit and His word to lead us into His ways rather than walking in our ways in His name.

### **Revival is *radical*.**

Revival is not normal church. It is explosive and at times uncomfortable. It stirs hearts, emotions, devils, and heaven. Revival does not come in standard packaging. It is emergency intervention on a dying patient. If we are uncomfortable with the intensity of an emergency room, we will be uncomfortable with revival.

### **Revival reveals the heart.**

God is not impressed with our excuses. We are good at giving excuses as to why we are not living for God. In fact, we are so good at giving excuses that we believe them ourselves! God has heard them all. But we cannot fool God. He knows what is in our heart. The Lord said through the prophet Jeremiah, *“The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked; who can know it? I, the Lord, search the heart, I test the mind, even to give to every man according to his ways, according to the fruit of his doings.”*(Jeremiah 17:9-10). We cannot know our own heart unless the Lord reveals it. God will often offend our mind to reveal our hearts. By this I mean that God will test us with things, people, or situations that insult or offend our minds in order to reveal the sin and iniquity in our heart. People who are seeking the Lord learn to embrace this work of God rather than to run from it. It means deliverance, freedom, and healing. That is why David cried out, *“Search me, O God, and know my heart; try me, and know my anxieties; and see if there is any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.”* (Psalm 139:23-24). We must allow God to search our hearts if we are going to experience true revival.

### **Revival is drastic.**

Our culture has been mortally wounded by sin, deception, and the attacks of Satan. Even the church has not escaped the blunt of Satan's devices. Revival is drastic intervention on a dying patient. We need to call God's 911 number---2 Chronicles 7:14---for holy intervention. We have living human casualties walking all around us. Maybe you are one of them. Revival turns the church into an ER to rescue the perishing and to care for the dying. The world has exhausted its means to bring order out of chaos. Now is the time for the church to shine if we will accept the cure for our own heart first---revival.

### **Revival is transformational.**

Revival will transform the church by bringing it back into focus with its true calling. While we should never forget what God has done for us in days past, we must decide if the church is going to be a museum for the saints or a maternity ward for new converts. Museums are quiet and orderly. Maternity wards are messy, noisy and chaotic. But there is fresh life in a maternity ward, not in a museum. Fresh new converts are the future and life-blood of the church. Without them the church is dead and on its way to a burial.

### **Revival is sometimes offensive.**

Revivals have never been popular and critics of revival always abound. Unfortunately, the experts on revival are often those who are most challenged by revival when it comes. Why? It is because we usually develop pre-conceived ideas of what a move of God will look like. But God is not obligated to come the way we think and He rarely does. He is not obligated to come as He did in the First and Second Great Awakenings. He is not obligated to come as He did back in grandpa's day. He is not obligated to begin revival in our church or in our denomination. He will come how and where He chooses, period. The Pharisees rejected Jesus because He did not fit their preconceived ideas of what the Messiah would look like. Tragically it can happen today when God pours out His Spirit in revival. We can be offended by the vessel, method, and place that God chooses to bring revival and, thereby, reject the revival for which we prayed. If we really want revival, we should not care how, where, or through whom it comes. If we do, our motives are wrong.

### **Revival brings a no-tolerance attitude toward sin in our lives.**



People who tolerate sin in their lives will not like revival. When we tolerate any level of sin in our lives we contribute to the darkness that pollutes the spiritual atmosphere around us. Settling for any amount of sin in our lives, no matter how small it may seem, is like buying bottled water which has on its label: "99 Percent Pure Water and 1% Sewage Water". Neither you nor I would ever consider drinking it! It is poison. We ignore the fact that God is holy and has never changed His mind on sin---period. He knows that sin in any amount will poison us. He demands that we pursue 100% holiness (I Thessalonians 5:23). The Lord says, "*Pursue peace with all people, and holiness without which no one will see the Lord.*" (Hebrews 12:14), and "*Be holy for I am holy.*" (I Peter 1:16). God compares us not with others, but with Himself.

### **Revival means *change*.**

Revival and change are almost synonymous. This is one of the greatest stumbling blocks to revival. We are creatures of habit. We like things to be comfortable and routine. We want to be respectable and accepted. We fail to realize that if we do not move with the times and seasons of God, we may die in the wilderness because the glory cloud has moved on without us. While God's message never changes, His methods do. They *always* do in revival. Why does God do this? I believe it is so we will never put Him in a box. Seeking God's face is always a fresh encounter. Many grieve for that old time religion. It is sad that those days are over. Many were touched in past generations when we could leave our doors unlocked and live next door to Aunt Bee and Andy in Mayberry. But those days are over. They are not coming back this side of Jesus' return. East Texas is not the same as it was fifty years ago. We are living in a different world when our kids can download pornography by the push of a computer key. Drugs, alcohol, guns, violence and gangs are normal daily encounters. Affairs, divorce, abuse, murder, suicide and a host of other social diseases plague our homes and cities. We can either grieve over the past or we can change to rescue this generation. Indeed, there is no other valid option. Revival *will* mean change. The question is, "Are we willing to change?"

### **Revival challenges church *business as usual*.**

It should when what we have been doing isn't working anyway. Insanity is doing the same thing over and over believing that we will get different results. It is time to consider our ways. It is time to confess that most of what we have built has been by our design and creativity without the foundation of heartfelt prayer and direction from God. We have learned how to do church without God. Education, degrees, money, politics and committees have replaced our dependence upon God. Professing ourselves to be wise, we have become fools. It is time to seek the Lord that He may revive us.

### **Revival realigns priorities.**

Time is God's gift to us. We were given a certain amount the day we were born and the clock is ticking away. How are we spending our time? Is our time invested on eternal things or things that are of no consequence? Most of our lives have become a preoccupation with the inconsequential.

Time reveals our priorities. Usually our time is consumed on the wrong things. We can tell if we need revival by looking at how we spend our time. How much time is devoted to God? If God is not central in our lives, other things *will* take up our time. Satan will help us fill our schedules with "good things" so that there will be no time for God. Good things rob us of God's best. Our choices for time in

East Texas reveal that we are devoted to sports, clubs, social gatherings, financial ventures, theatre, hobbies, shopping, traveling, etc. more than to God. Of course, what time we have left is spent recuperating so that we can start all over again. Someone once said that we have time for what we really *want* to do. This is the key. Our desires set our priorities. Revival will change our priorities by changing our desires.

### **Revival removes the *veil of blindness*.**

Revival comes when God in mercy removes the veil of self-deception and spiritual blindness so that His people see themselves as He sees them. Jesus said to the church at Laodicea, *"I know your works, that you are neither cold nor hot. I could wish that you were cold or hot. So then, because you are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, will I vomit you out of My mouth. Because you say, 'I am rich, have need of nothing'---and do not know that you are wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked---*" (Revelation 3:15-17). Obviously God sees us differently than we see ourselves. Why? It is because we compare ourselves with others. We can always find someone worse than we are. We then use these comparisons to justify our status before God. But God says, *"There is none righteous, no, not one; there is none who understands; there is none who seeks after God. They have all turned aside; they have together become unprofitable; there is none who does good, no, not one. Their throat is an empty tomb; with their tongues they have practiced deceit; the poison of asps is under their lips; whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness. Their feet are swift to shed blood; destruction and misery are in their ways; and the ways of peace they have not known. There is no fear of God before their eyes."* (Romans 3:10-18). The truth is that we are full of iniquity and sin. When we begin to approve ourselves before God, it is self-righteousness and a sure sign that we need revival!

### **Revival will restore the love of God's people.**

Revival will deal with the walls of division, judgment, and criticism among God's people. Walls of prejudice and denominationalism will fall. These walls are high and strong in "good ole" East Texas. But God does not approve. The scripture is clear, *"If someone says, 'I love God,' and hates his brother, he is a liar; for he who does not love his brother whom he has seen, how can he love God whom he has not seen? And this commandment we have from Him: that he who loves God must love his brother also."* (I John 4:20-21). These are strong words which we must reconcile in our hearts if we are to please God and have true revival. Revival will cause us to admit that our divisions based on personal preferences, internal politics, power, recognition, racial and denominational distinctions, styles of worship, and petty doctrinal differences have been wrong and have robbed the church of her power of influence and witness to the world. Revival will restore a love that brings unity in the midst of our diversities both inside and outside our congregations.

### **Revival is God coming down *in glory*.**

Glory is God's manifest presence. We have settled for God's omnipresence in our worship services rather than seeking to know why there is no *manifest* presence of God in our midst. Revival comes when the manifest presence of God returns to His church. When God comes down, everything changes. Read Isaiah 64. What was it like when God came down upon Mount Sinai? We must admit that we have never met God, *really met God!* God's presence will "mess up" our church services. Our order of services will not accommodate the work of the Holy Spirit. Our order is usually out of order with God. Time does not matter to God. In fact, we are afraid of the move of God. Why? Because we are afraid of losing control, the very thing that has removed God from His own house.

We are afraid that if God has control that He may forget to let us out at twelve noon! He might forget about the ball game. He might forget about our lunch appointment! What if God chooses to move past twelve noon? He might allow things that make us uncomfortable. What if the preacher cannot preach? What if the song service lasts an hour, or maybe two? What if no one can sing or preach but a holy awe comes in so that everyone is on their faces before God? Are we supposed to do that in church? What if weeping breaks out, or cries for mercy and repentance? Are these things decent and in order? You better believe it! That is, of course, decent and in order with God's order, not necessarily our own. When God's glory fills the house, we will have to learn a new protocol and a new order than what we have prescribed. Ours will end up in the trash can.

### **Revival is God coming down *in power*.**

The devil and religion has robbed the church of her power. The devil is no more afraid of a church with authority but no power than a criminal is afraid of an officer with a badge but no weapon. Power is essential in enforcing authority. The devil has deceived us into believing God sent us here with a badge but no power or anointing. Why would the devil tell us that? Because the anointing of God is given to break his power! (Acts 10:38) Religion has believed that God confiscated our weapons and the power of the Holy Spirit after the first century. Though it is not in the Bible, the story has been told long enough that we believe it is true. This belief would suggest that anyone who claims that miracles, signs, wonders, and the powerful demonstrations of the Holy Spirit are still operative and needed in the church today should be avoided. But Paul said that in the *last days* that there would be those "having a form of godliness but *denying its power. And from such people turn away!*" (2 Timothy 3:5). The warning for the last days is not against the demonstration of power in the church but against the *denial of power in the church!* We need the power of God in the church. Our self-righteousness looks at the lack of power evidenced in the church and concludes "Miracles, signs, and wonders have all passed away!" (thereby blaming the lack of power in the church on God), when it would be more honest to ask, "God, why are we not seeing the power in the church today like it was in the early church?" and, thereby, put the blame on us! Only when we are honest can we recover from our unbelief and seek New Testament authority and power. We are not to follow after signs, but the Bible does tell us that signs are to follow us who *believe* (Mark 16:15-20). Restoring faith in God's power is about reaching a generation who must see that Jesus Christ is alive and ruling in power over the gods of this age!

The gospel must be declared not only in word but also in confirming power. Jesus told His disciples to tarry until they were "*endued with power from on high*" (Luke 24:49). Later when they were endued with power, Mark 16:20 records: "*And they went out and preached everywhere, the Lord working with them and confirming the word through the accompanying signs.*" Paul said to the Corinthians, "*And my speech and my preaching were not with persuasive words of human wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and power that your faith should not be in the wisdom of men but in the power of God.*" (I Corinthians 2:4-5). He said again to the Thessalonian church, "For our gospel did not come to you in word only, but also *in power*, and in the Holy Spirit" (I Thessalonians 1:5). Paul said to the Roman church, "*For I will not dare to speak of any of those things which Christ has not accomplished through me, in word and deed, to make the Gentiles obedient--in mighty signs and wonders, by the power of the Spirit of God, so that from Jerusalem and round about to Illyricum I have fully preached the gospel of Christ.*" (Romans 15:18-19)

## **Revival is God's wake up call.**

Revival is as seeker sensitive as a bell alarm clock at five o'clock in the morning. No one likes alarm clocks. They are not fun or pleasant, but they are needed. The church has been asleep too long! The Lord said to the church in Rome, "*It is high time to awake out of sleep . . . the night is far spent, the day is at hand. Therefore let us cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armor of light.*" (Romans 13:11-12). When the church begins to wake up, all of hell will tremble in fear! The army of God, clad in the armor of light, will rise up to crush the powers of darkness.

We must prepare ourselves now for revival by remaining humble and eager for revival however the Lord would bring it. We cannot afford to procrastinate. The preparation of the ten virgins in Matthew 25 reveals a lot about them. Those who did not keep themselves prepared with oil were not prepared to meet the bridegroom when He came. If we say that we want revival, it is imperative that we begin preparing our hearts now lest we be unprepared to embrace it when it comes. The Holy Spirit is drawing His people into intimacy with the Lord so that when He comes, He will need no introduction.

## **Conclusion of the matter**

East Texas needs revival. I hope this pamphlet has helped make clear the true call and need for our area. More than that, I hope you have developed an insatiable thirst for revival in East Texas. Without revival there is little real hope for the church, individuals, families, and for our society. Yet I am convinced that God is even now pouring out His Spirit upon His churches. I believe He is stirring a hunger and thirst for Him in lives just like your own for revival. We must respond out of a pure heart. God is not looking for perfect people; He is looking for *hungry* people. Are you hungry? Are you thirsty for revival? Then begin today by turning to God in full repentance and devotion. Pray earnestly for revival and seek God with others who also want revival. Begin to prepare your heart even now. If your experience with God has been religious---church membership, church attendance, or just a token prayer from time to time, God has something more than what you are experiencing. He wants you to have a life changing relationship with Him, your God and Savior. Don't settle for "religion" (empty form). It is artificial. Seek the Substance----Jesus! If you do not know Jesus Christ in an intimate way as your Lord and Savior, then ask Him to forgive you of your sins, and call upon His name to save you. Invite Jesus to come into your heart as your Lord and Savior. Determine to follow Him all the days of your life. Follow Him in believer's baptism (water baptism by immersion). Get connected with a local church God where people are hungry and growing in God. Then begin to cry out to God,

**"Lord, Send Revival to East Texas!"**

May He do it in our day!

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