

The Heartbeat of
The Remnant

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... is Others, Lord, Yes Others

The Heartbeat of
The Remnant

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A

Motivating Vision

for Our Homes

Taken from the book The Pursuit of Godly Seed, by Denny Kenaston

*Where there is no **vision**, the people perish,
but he that keepeth the Law, happy is he.
Proverbs 29:18*



There was, in the days of Samuel the Prophet, a sad state of affairs in Israel. The ministers of the day had lost their relationship with God, and compromise was creeping in on every hand. God uses a few revealing words, which describe the condition of the nation at that time. “*There was no open vision*” (I Sam. 3:1). Although we have several chapters of sad commentary to read after this

statement, these words say it all, in a nutshell. There was no open vision, and the people were perishing. We seem to be suffering from some of the same in modern America. I can think of no better words to describe the sad state of present day American Christianity.

What is a vision? It is important to give some definition to this powerful little word, because I will be using it many times. In fact,

the hope and future of your family lies hidden in this one word. When I use the word vision, I am referring to a vision that is a mental image imprinted upon the heart by the Spirit of God. A vision is that which you see with the eyes of your heart. The Apostle Paul described it as something “written...with the Spirit of the living God...in the fleshly tables of the heart.” (II Cor. 3:3) A vision is a spiritual revelation of the mind and will of God. That revelation usually comes through the avenue of the Scriptures. When we read the Word of God in the Spirit, dreams and visions flame up in our hearts.

I was surprised and blessed one day as I was studying the Hebrew word “dream.” It means, “to make healthy,” or “to be strengthened.” It is an ideal, or aspiration, that makes us healthy and strong. Isn’t that beautiful? We know that dreams work like that in man. When a man has a dream, he comes alive, he is filled with energy, and his whole being is consumed with what he sees and wants. This is what I mean, when I use the word vision.

Probably the most famous verse in the Bible on this subject is the one listed at the beginning of this chapter. “Where there is no vision, the people perish” A study of this verse is very revealing to our present day American problems. The people as a whole do not see what God sees or wants. There is a lack of open vision in our land. That spiritual seeing of the heart is missing in too many churches and homes.

The word “perish” is even more descriptive. It means, “To cast off restraint.” It does not mean to go to hell. It is much more practical

then that. Allow me to paraphrase my study of the verse. “Where there is not a spiritual seeing of God’s will in the heart, the people will cast off restraint, go naked, and live like savages.” Wow! What a picture of the degenerated condition of America. In addition, of course, the end of that process is they will go to hell. We must get a captivating view of God’s will today and hold the eyes of our heart upon it until it motivates and activates us to keep his Laws again. We know that this whole process of degeneration

begins when a people who know God cease to walk closely with him. The seeing of the heart grows dim because it is God’s presence in the heart that stimulates vision. As the vision grows dim, the people begin to cast off restraint. We know the rest of the story. This explains the confusion of much of American Christianity.

All these thoughts preface my burden for our homes. We must get a motivating vision for our homes. Only God can give us such a vision, however, we have our part to play also. When we begin to sigh and cry unto God with a longing aspiration, he is obligated to impart to us a revelation

of his will, as well as a revelation of our need. It is my personal conviction that, because we lack this spiritual seeing of the heart, our homes lack substance and direction. My constant prayer, as I write these chapters, is that God would graciously grant us that seeing experience again and again. This seeing brings a transforming of the heart, and of course, a transformation of the home will follow.

Having a vision is so important. I cannot emphasize it enough. Your journey through



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this book must be more than a time of gathering information. New information usually lasts a few weeks and then falls to the back of our memory. However, a vision is life changing, and it will last for many years. By the time Jackie and I finish the task of raising our children, we will have about forty years invested in the project (not to mention the years of grandparenting that follows the parenting). My desire, “*by grace through faith*” is to impart to you a vision for your children that will burn in you and consume you for many years to come.

Let us ponder some of the inner dynamics of a God-breathed vision. God moves and motivates His people by giving them a vision. The Bible is filled with examples of this inner working of God’s spirit. When God is about to do something, He begins with a vision in the heart of a man or a people. When God spoke to Abraham, He gave him a promise, but that promise had a vision of His will in it. God began to “*call those things which be not as though they were*” (Rom. 4:17b). Abraham saw them with the eyes of his heart, and began to act accordingly. This is how a vision works in the heart of man.

God spoke to the children of Israel in Deuteronomy 28. He painted a beautiful picture of a people, baptized in, and overflowing with blessings. This was meant to be a vision for all who would see it, believe it, and obey the conditions that he gave them. As we study the history of this people, there are times when they were literally blessed in everything they did. Those who walked in the vision that they

saw, received the reality of a life that is blessed on every side.

Now, all these inner dynamics apply to our homes as well. The Bible is pregnant with God’s heart for our homes. His promises, His will, and His visions are waiting there to be birthed in our hearts. Visions are born when the Spirit of God takes the Word of God, and makes it alive in our hearts. The New Testament word for this inner dynamic is the Greek word “*rhema*.” It literally means, God speaking His Word to me. We all know the joy of this experience when a verse just jumps off the page and into our hearts. We know it is God speaking to us personally through His word. As parents, we should be earnestly seeking God for these “*rhema*’s” for our families. God will give them to us. We must have faith. He will do it!

The Prophet Joel spoke of a day to come when the Spirit of God would be poured out upon God’s people. He described the results of this anointing in some thrilling pictures. One of those pictures was a people filled with dreams and visions. This happened on the Day of Pentecost, fifty

days after Christ’s ascension. On that day, 3,120 people were filled with the promise of the Father. That anointing, and the visions that came from it caused those people to fill Jerusalem with the doctrine of Christ and his resurrection. We still live in the age of this prophecy. We are to be a people filled with visions born by that same Spirit. God wants to fill our hearts with dreams and visions of a godly home. It is His will, and He is waiting to give us more than we ask.



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A Disease in the Eyes

In the last days of the apostle John, Christ sent a message to the church at Laodicea, through him. Laodicea was a lukewarm church, which had been hot and full of the reality of Christ at one time. Among other things, they had lost their vision. Spiritually, they could not see anymore. They were beginning to cast off restraints, and Christ even told them they were naked, wretched, and blind. What a perfect description of the definition I gave earlier. They were perishing. His counsel to them concerning their blindness was “*anoint thine eyes with eye salve, that thou mayest see*” (Rev. 3:18c). We all know that God is referring to the eyes of the heart in these verses. He finished by pleading with them, speaking words of true reality. Let us read them out loud slowly here.

*Behold, I stand at the door and knock:
If any man hear my voice, and open the door,
I will come in to him, and will sup with him,
And he with Me. Rev. 3:20*

Christ’s words to the brothers and sisters at Laodicea were strong yet true. He was outside of their lives looking in. The reality of fellowship was gone. His voice was knocking, knocking, but they did not hear. They did not want to hear, and their ears became dull. He pleads with them to let Him in, through repentance. He promised them beautiful restored communion, and assured them of his love.

Beloved, where is your vision? What do you see with the eyes of your heart? As you sit and read these words, how do they find you personally? When was the last time you heard from God, and you knew it. Do you have eye disease like the Laodicean’s did? They were thinking they had everything together, when in reality, they were falling apart. Maybe you feel these words are not proper to write in a book. However, let us reason together. I would be a very unkind friend to stir your heart about

having a vision, and then not tell you how you can get one.

Visions come from God. He is the author of every one of them. If there is no reality in your life, you will find it hard to get a vision, and hold on to it. I want the instructions that will follow, to be more than the “how to’s” of raising children for God. What we see is very important. God always precedes the reality of what he is going to do, with a vision. That is exciting, if you know where you are going, because, according to the testimony of Abraham, what you see, you will have. However, if you do not see, that is very troubling because, if you do not see, you will not have. What you see with the eyes of your heart now probably will determine where your family will be in five years. Beloved parents, let us break our hearts before God and seek Him for an open vision for our families. It is better to weep now, then to weep later when it is too late. I will spend the next few chapters expounding the vision that God wants for our homes, but we must have a good and honest heart as the one described in the parable of the sower.

I will close this chapter with some of the most encouraging words in the Bible. Paul, writing to the church at Ephesus, admonished them with an overflowing proclamation about God. He said that God was able (full of power) “*to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us*” (Eph. 3:20). If I understand this verse, that covers our dreams and visions completely. Let us get ourselves to the place where this “*power that worketh in us,*” is working in us personally, and then the sky is the limit.

Father, we bow together before You who see. We know that You see us even as we sit here pondering what we have read. Give us a vision for our homes dear Lord. Open the eyes of our hearts to see. I desperately need You to work in my heart this very moment. I want to move into the rest of this book with an open face before you. Soften my heart to receive your imprint of a godly home. In Jesus Christ name, Amen.

□

The Resurrection of the Unsaved

To you who are unsaved, the word "resurrection" has no music—when you hear that the body shall rise again—yes, that the soul and body shall live and Christ shall sit in judgment. Think not when your body is put into the soil you have done with it. You cannot cast away or set aside God's own revelation—the Bible—which tells so clearly that small and great shall rise when the Archangel's trump shall sound. Yes, then from the Church Yard, the Sea, and the Battle-field, thousands upon thousands who have slept, all will awake and be there, at that Great Judgment seat—that "great and terrible day—" as it is called. Unsaved Sinner, think what then will be your position—unless in life, you had claimed the Lord Jesus Christ as your Saviour. Then His words will come to mind:

"Then shall they call upon me, but I will not answer; they shall seek me early, but they shall not find me: For that they hated knowledge, and did not choose the fear of the LORD: They would none of my counsel: they despised all my reproof. Therefore shall they eat of the fruit of their own way, and be filled with their own devices. For the turning away of the simple shall slay them, and the prosperity of fools shall destroy them. But whoso hearkeneth unto me shall dwell safely, and shall be quiet from fear of evil."
Proverbs 1:28-33

Can A Christian Be Patriotic?



by Michael McDaniel

Our Christian walk overlaps the worldly walk in so many areas—some without conflict and others with much conflict. So much so, that there is constant need for serious examination of our values and loyalties to ensure that we have an eye that is single toward Heaven and an emphasis on matters which are Spiritual. Since the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks, our country has been riding a crest of patriotism. As I drove through our home town today, July 31, 2004, banners and flags were everywhere, heralding the return of local men and women who served in Iraq. Many store windows were painted in red, white and blue with endearing words of “Thanks”, “We Love You”, and “Welcome

Home”. Yellow ribbons and balloons and “ribbon” car decals spoke of patriotic pride and gratitude. Part of my heart was deeply touched by this hometown pride and nationalistic fervor. But something in my spirit was uneasy with those feelings. Brethren, it is so easy for Christians to be swept up in this national tide and carried away. We may certainly be thankful for their service, but I want to challenge us to consider whether it is permissible to be openly “patriotic.” Can we who profess to belong to the kingdom of God also be firmly rooted in this nation of men? When folks get around and talk, and “run the flag up the pole” as it were, should we be found giving patriotic opinions and joining in heated rhetoric?

As citizens in the kingdom of God, we must be careful not to send a mixed signal or present a *wrong testimony*.

I realize that this is a very unpopular topic, and I share these thoughts at the risk of offending some and alienating others. It is unpopular because these above mentioned events have unified a divided nation, and to appear unpatriotic is to appear un-American. Who of us do not know someone who has either served in war, or lost loved ones in battle? Not only is teaching on non-resistance disdained by the secular world, but the majority of the religious world has American flags on their church stages, and their young men go to battle with the graces of their pastors and priests. Although the subject of nonresistance is unpopular, we believe it to be Biblical.

Let me say that I believe we are blessed to live in the best nation on earth. God has graciously allowed us to live here and raise our families in a country of freedoms. I am thankful for this blessing. But, does that make me patriotic? There are serious ramifications if we misunderstand patriotism. We are going to examine some areas of patriotism and ask you to lay your understanding of patriotism along side of these observations and compare. If they do not apply to you, then perhaps your understanding and practice of patriotism is appropriate. If you are convicted in certain areas, then please search your soul on the matter.

*Breathes there the man with soul so dead,
Who never to himself hath said,
This is my own, my native land!*

(Sir Walter Scott)

The word *patriot* comes from the Greek *patris*, meaning fatherland. A patriot, then, is one who loves and zealously supports his own country. By this definition, we can exclude any “fair weather” citizens. We are talking about people who have an intense love of country and vigorously support it. In Scripture, the word *patris* is Strong’s number 3968 {pat-rece’}, meaning: 1) one’s native country; 1a) one’s fatherland, one’s own country, a fixed abode or home; and 1b) one’s own native place, i.e. a city. It appears eight times in the New Testament, seven of which speak about Christ’s home land, and one about Heaven.

Matthew 13:54 *And when he was come into his own country, he taught them in their synagogue, insomuch that they were astonished, and said, Whence hath this [man] this wisdom, and [these] mighty works?*

John 4:44 *For Jesus himself testified, that a prophet hath no honour in his own country.*

Hebrews 11:16 *But now they desire a better country, that is, an heavenly: wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God: for he hath prepared for them a city.*

Again, for purposes of this study, *patrio* means one who loves and *zealously supports* his own country. Americans from the inner cities to the farmlands are extremely patriotic! They love this great land and appreciate its freedoms. But Americans do not have a corner on this market. From a college course in Russian History, I learned that Russians use the term *rodina*—the umbilical tie to the land (since the lifeblood comes from the earth.) Roughly translated, it means “love of land” or patriotism. The Russians are fiercely nationalistic (please note the distinction between *nationalistic* and *communist*—that being land versus politics.)

They have a saying, “*pust khuzhe, da nashe,*” which means “let it be worse...but let it be ours!” This enables them to cope with the harsh elements, oppressive regimes, and poor living conditions. Entire auditoriums can be reduced to tears at the playing of patriotic hymns. I think you find this to be true around the globe. *This is my own, my native land!* Men march off into battle to defend their country, and willingly die for their

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land. Men have a genuine feeling of attachment to country, and a great loyalty to country.

Neither Montaigne in writing his essays, nor Descartes in building new worlds, nor Burnet in framing an antediluvian earth, no, nor Newton in discovering and establishing the true laws of geometry, felt more intellectual joys than he feels who is a real patriot, who bends all the force of his understanding, and directs all his thoughts and actions, to the good of his country. (Bolingbroke)

Let's be truthful and honest—I know a measure of these feelings and so do you. But whether it is Biblical or pleasing to God for us to *zealously support this country—or bend all the force of our understanding, and direct all our thoughts and actions, to the good of our country*—is a question we should ponder. When we consider the question, “*Can a Christian be Patriotic?*”, the answer, quite simply, is, “*It depends.*” I think we must consider some prevalent viewpoints in our nation associated with *patriotism* (right or wrong) and ask ourselves whether we hold those same beliefs.

1.

A Patriot Loves the Flag and Pledges Allegiance To It

Patriotism causes us to idolize an *ideal*; we become enamored with “country,” “freedoms,” and “rights.” These ideals call for icons (images) or symbols to endear us to the cause. One such icon is the flag. By definition, a flag is simply *a piece of cloth with colors and patterns used as a symbol of a nation, state, organization or as a signal, banner, or standard*. But it is so much more than that, isn't it? The flag is a symbol of America, and the American way of life. Americans use endearing names such as “Old Glory,” “The Grand Old Flag,” and the “Stars and Stripes.” The National Anthem, the “Star Spangled Banner,” is written aptly about a flag still waving in the heat of the battle, giving hope to the battle-weary. It elicits tremendous emotion and pride and hats are taken off when it's sung. Perhaps the hand is placed over the heart. Tears fill the eyes. As a young man, I was taught to

respect the flag and honor it. There are rules for folding it and displaying it, and even to properly dispose of it when it becomes tattered and worn. But those who hate America burn the flag as an insult and in so doing they desecrate an American *icon*. They are railing against our beliefs and our nation. Since America recently came under attack from terrorists, the flag has become prominent everywhere you go. Shortly after “9/11,” we took a trip to the Oregon coast and all along the way we saw the flag on cars, businesses, homes, fences and some flying half-mast. Those flags said:

“I am an American, and proud of it!”

“I love this country and I am hurting along with countless millions.”

“We are strong and we will survive!”

To see this symbol evidenced along our journey was very powerful. It was like the nation, oft-divided, was pulled together and knit into one enormous fabric, united and strong. But, those flags also said to me:

“I support the President in his pledge to eradicate terrorism.”

“We are *united* in cause, in purpose, in *resolve*” (to see justice meted out).

“I support and endorse carnal warfare and the taking of human life.”

Brethren, we are to be as pilgrims in a strange land—sojourners wandering without a home, awaiting that day when our Father will give us a home with Him in Heaven. Earthly ties and carnal allegiances are evident to all if we display the flag or claim to be “patriotic.” To others, we may be saying:

“THIS is my home.” (not Heaven.)

“THIS is the land I will die for.” (Is that true?)

“THIS is what I love!” (More than Jesus?)

Again, by our actions and words we can give *wrong testimony* to others, by suggesting that this is where our true heart lies. We don't want to send mixed signals, and do not want to defraud

anyone. The patriot pledges his allegiance to this flag. Allegiance is defined, in the patriotic sense, as: “to bind; the duty of being loyal to one’s government or country.” That presents a major conflict to the Christian, since the child of God is to give *total* allegiance to Jehovah God. Deuteronomy 6:5 says, *And thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might.* I am told that there was a time when it was taught in public schools that when a person displayed the American flag, it meant that he was pledged to defend it and the country it represented. Again, this represents conflicts for the Christian professing non-resistance.

▲ If patriotism requires a Christian to display the flag, pledge their allegiance to it, and promise to defend it...**then it is sinful.** If these are not requirements for patriotism, then perhaps it is not.

2. Patriotism Emphasizes an Earthly Home

Did Christ show us by example that it was important to put down roots? To show civic pride? To place heritage or homeland above serving God? No. The Scripture makes reference to “his own country” simply stating that it was the place of his earthly home. His clear purpose was not to defend and love that home, but to serve the Father and redeem the lost. His dwelling place was not earthly, but Heavenly. Likewise, the Apostle Paul said in Philippians 3:20, *For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ....*

In this passage, the word *conversation* (4175 *politeuma* {pol-it’-yoo-mah}) means a state or commonwealth. Like Paul, our commonwealth must be in Heaven, not here. Yes, we live in a wonderful country with great blessings. But our state and commonwealth in Heaven is far greater. We must not split our allegiances, but have an eye “single” toward our commonwealth above.

A vivid example of priorities is found in the story of the Rechabites, who refused to own any land, any gardens or vineyards. They were nomadic, serving God “unattached” to any pos-

sessions of land. They had no loyalties to country and no allegiances to any flag. In so doing, they avoided many temptations and pitfalls. Likewise, the “heroes of faith,” recorded in Hebrews 11, all had an eye “single” toward a Heavenly home and were not concerned with their temporary station in life. Any battles that were fought were for God’s glory and to carry out His commands, not to endear themselves to a certain country. None fought for country, but for God. Their country was above.

Heb 11:13-16: These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. For they that say such things declare plainly that they seek a country. And truly, if they had been mindful of that country from whence they came out, they might have had opportunity to have returned. But now they desire a better country, that is, an heavenly: wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God: for he hath prepared for them a city.

▲ If patriotism misplaces our focus—on the temporal rather than the Heavenly—**then it is sinful.** If we can maintain an eye “single” toward Heaven, and still profess love for country without contradiction or conflict, then it is not.

3. Patriotism Esteems the Gift More Than the Giver

God gave us a good gift when He allowed us to be citizens of this country. But, do we love it more than Him? Nathan Hale, the epitome of a

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patriot, uttered as his last words in 1776, “I only regret that I have but one life to lose **for my country.**” Notice, he did not say, “for my God...” but, “**for my country.**”

Let me give a word picture. A man lost his wife after a battle with cancer, and was left with only his son to raise. As the son grew to his teenage years, the man wanted to show his love for his son...but he had little money, due to the years of medical expenses on his wife. He had one treasured possession to pass on to his son. For years he had treasured a mint condition 1957 Corvette. He counseled his son regarding the proper use and care of the car, and gave it to him on his 16th birthday. As time went on, the boy developed such a love for this car—washing, waxing, tuning, and idolizing it. He was the most popular boy in school and the envy of every guy. He found he had less and less time for Dad these days—too much to do and places to go. Then Dad became ill, and the doctors diagnosed that he needed an expensive operation to save his life. The cost of the operation was more than they had. The young man knew that he could sell the car for enough to pay for the operation. But, he loved that car. It was *his* car. Dad had given it to him, and he could do with as he wished. After much soul searching, and counsel, he came to the conclusion that he had come to love the *gift* more than the *giver*. He sold the Corvette, paid for the operation, and found something far more valuable.

In this country, many have grown to love the gift more than the giver. They are even willing to die for the *gift* rather than for the *giver*. We look to the Middle East, where bloodshed is common over a piece of real estate known as the Gaza Strip. Israelis defend the homeland with all their might. Palestinians clamor for ground. The gift has become of paramount importance—and God has been lost in the equation. The Bible tells of this propensity of man to forget him, and focus on the land:

Deuteronomy 6:10-15 *And it shall be, when the LORD thy God shall have brought thee into the land which he swore unto thy fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, to give thee*



great and goodly cities, which thou buildedst not, And houses full of all good [things], which thou filledst not, and wells digged, which thou diggedst not, vineyards and olive trees, which thou plantedst not; when thou shalt have eaten and be full; Then beware lest thou forget the LORD, which brought thee forth out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage.

Patriotism places so much emphasis on the *land*, and *the country*, that the *giver* seems to be secondary in importance. God is a jealous God, and will not take a back seat to the gift He gave. If God took away His wonderful *gift*—this land, these freedoms—would we still love, worship, and praise Him? Like Job, if it all went away, would we retain our integrity? The patriot who loves country so much will be bitter and hope to die rather than live under another government’s control. Examples in Scripture show how God’s children excelled in high positions after being taken into captivity.

Joseph, Daniel, and Nehemiah were all loyal to their foreign rulers, and also loyal to God.

Joseph used this to the blessing of his captor nation and his homeland. Daniel said, “O, King

live forever!” Nehemiah gained

favor and confidence as the cup bearer, and it allowed him to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem. All loved God first and foremost, and served Him wherever they were. They all loved the *giver* more than the *gift*! None cried, “Give me liberty or give me death!”

Habakkuk 3:17-19 *Although the fig tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the vines; the labour of the olive shall fail, and the fields shall yield no meat; the flock shall be cut off from the fold, and there shall be no herd in the stalls: Yet I will rejoice in the LORD, I will joy in the God of my salvation. The LORD God is my strength, and he will make my feet like hinds’ feet, and he will make me to walk upon mine high places.*

▲ If patriotism causes us to love the *gift* (our country) more than the *giver*... **then it is sinful.** If,

however, we always hold God in higher esteem than country and keep the gift in perspective.....perhaps it is not.

4. Patriotism Has Its Roots in Pride

Patriotism and pride go hand in hand. Once, I picked up a *USA Today* while on vacation, and came across a full page reproduction of the US flag, which the advertiser was urging folks to display. In the margin, it stated “**Display Your American Pride.**” The flag is synonymous with pride. We hear phrases like: “American Proud,” “Proud to be American,” and “Made in the USA.” I venture to say that pride is at the core of most sins that man can name, and is condemned throughout Scripture. Primarily, the Bible deals with personal pride and arrogance, but what about *civic pride*? Is there anything wrong with this? Since we are dealing with a carnal use of the word, let’s look at Webster’s definition:

- (4) delight or satisfaction in one’s achievements, children, etc.
- (6) the best of a class, group, etc.; pick

Taking the first definition, are we satisfied and delighted because we are a nation that is following God’s precepts and commands? Or, because we are the mightiest nation on earth, the leader of the free world, the financial kingpin of the nations, the defender of the just, the breadbasket of the world, and the model for Democracy? Looking at the second definition, are we proud because we are the “best of the best?”

A good definition of *pride* is: *when we take the credit for what God has done.* Rather, it should be: *Give God the glory, give your authority the credit, and you get the joy.* For example, I may be “proud” of my children, in the sense that I am satisfied that they are godly and choosing to follow Christ’s example. I would give God the glory, their mother the credit, and I get the joy. I cannot allow myself to be proud (puffed up) simply because they are my lineage and they happen to do something extraordinary or have some talent which pops the buttons off my chest as it swells with

pride. Making the comparison, I can be satisfied (delighted) that we have religious freedoms and a strong governmental system that protects the innocent and punishes the evil. For that, I can give God the glory, our founding fathers or current rulers the credit, and I get the joy. I cannot allow myself to be “puffed up” with a nationalistic pride because we are a super power, or simply because this is the land where I was born.

Examples of Nationalistic Pride in Scripture:

The same attributes that are condemned on a personal level are also condemned on a *civic* or *national* level. In Leviticus 26, the Lord promises to send great tribulations upon the people if they refuse to keep His commandments, including punishment at the hands of their enemies. In verse 19 we read, “*And I will break the pride of your power; and I will make your heaven as iron, and your earth as brass.*”

A Scriptural definition of pride is (01347 *ga’own* {gaw-ohn’}): Exaltation, majesty, pride, excellence of nations, arrogance.

We see an example of this in the following passages:

Ezekiel 30:6 *Thus saith the LORD; They also that uphold Egypt shall fall; and the pride of her power shall come down: from the tower of Syene shall they fall in it by the sword, saith the Lord GOD.*

Jer 13:9 *Thus saith the LORD, After this manner will I mar the pride of Judah, and the great pride of Jerusalem.*

Hosea 5:5 *And the pride of Israel doth testify to his face: therefore shall Israel and Ephraim fall in their iniquity; Judah also shall fall with them.*

In this country,
many have grown
to love the gift more
than the giver.
They are even
willing to die for
the gift rather than
for the giver.

Another word we find in Scripture is 01346 ga'avah {gah-av-aw'} 1) pride, majesty, a rising up, 1a) a rising up, swelling (of the sea); 1b) majesty (of Israel); 1c) pride, haughtiness

We find an example of this word in Isaiah 25:11 *And he shall spread forth his hands in the midst of them, as he that swimmeth spreadeth forth his hands to swim: and he shall bring down their pride together with the spoils of their hands.*

Scripture condemns pride of nation because it carries the connotation of arrogance, haughtiness and self-confidence rather than dependence on God.

▲ If our patriotism is earmarked by carnal pride in military might, financial prowess, and position as the world's largest super power, **then it is sinful**. If, however, we take pride in our nation's achievements which glorify God (freedom of religion, humanitarian efforts, role as peacekeeper, democratic rule, recognized days of prayer), and are careful to give God the glory and our authorities the credit...then perhaps this pride is justified.

5.

Patriots Are Confident In Our Nation's Strength

We mention this here because of the verses we just considered regarding God breaking a nation's "**pride of power**." Pride is sinful, but so is false confidence in our nation's might. This nation takes great pride in its weapons of mass destruction and highly trained forces. Our military tacticians are top-notch, and our vast resources and mobility are deemed strengths. Men get "puffed up" in this might and relish the power. We recall how God punished David for counting his armies...because it showed he *trusted in his own strength*.

Many times in Scripture we see where God visibly showed the Israelites that He was the source of their strength in battle. The battle of Ai, Jericho, and others are examples of this. When Moses's arms remained lifted high in the air, God's people prevailed. And yet, the patriot is confident in military might.

▲ If patriotism causes us to place more confidence and trust in our nation's strength than in God's **it is sinful**. If, however, we rightly ascribe all power and majesty and might to Jehovah God, and realize that He is in control...then our confidence is well-placed.

6.

Patriotism is Often Blind

Our country! In her intercourse with foreign nations, may she always be in the right; but our country right or wrong. (Stephen Decatur)

Blind patriotism says, "America, right or wrong," which is contrary to our Christian beliefs. If this nation engages in immoral, sinful, vengeful, or inhumane acts, we cannot condone it or endorse it simply because we are Americans. Sin is sin, and we cannot rubber-stamp it or look the other way in the name of patriotism. Statements such as, "*My country, right or wrong*," and "*America ...Love It or Leave it!*" are based upon *emotion*, not logic, reason, and Scripture. There is a grave danger in acting upon emotions.

Blind patriotism also clouds truth; therefore, we may be supporting error in ignorance. Men are prone to propaganda and half-truths, to uphold the "image" of American values. Blind patriotism believes all and trusts all in the name of patriotism. I heard an interview of an award-winning photographer who photographed the so-called "smart bombs" that were launched against Saddam Hussein's Baghdad. The news reports said these were only aimed at military targets and that these "smart" missiles were guided to their target. The photographer took pictures of innocent civilians who were killed in non-military areas. He smuggled the film out of the country in his sock. The major networks refused to air the pictures, fearing repercussions from the government and a backlash of patriotic public sentiment that was riding high at the time. Men cannot be trusted...God can. We follow Him in obedient faith and are assured that He will never deceive.

▲ When men disregard reason and blindly follow country.....*then patriotism is sinful*. If we are well-grounded in the Word, our faith is rock-solid, and we realize that our nation—however strong—is made up of men who are fallible, then our patriotic vision is not blind.

7.

Patriots Feel the Need to Defend Their “Rights,” “Freedoms,” and “Possessions”

The founding fathers spoke of certain *unalienable rights* which Americans should expect and demand. For many, these rights are worth dying for. Patrick Henry cried, “*Give me liberty or give me death!*” As Christians, however, we are to follow Christ’s example and yield our rights. Christ yielded his rights to home, reputation, power and position, even though he was worthy and deserving of all. When wronged, He did not retaliate. When hung on a cross, He prayed for their forgiveness. Within the body of Christ, we submit ourselves one to another in love (Eph 5:21). In the world, we submit to the rulers of the land (1 Pet 2:13). In all, we obey God rather than man (Acts 5:29). When it comes to “rights” and defending possessions, we must be like Isaac who, when dealing with the contentious herdsman of Gerar, simply “dug another well.” Isaac teaches us how to yield our rights and promote peace.

▲ When the patriot refuses to yield rights but defends them and demands them, *it is sinful*. If we can emulate Christ and yield our rights, and dig another well—we can be a Christian, *but can we be a true patriot?*

8.

Patriotism Typically Demands Revenge for Wrongs Perpetrated Against One’s Country

Rom 12:19 *Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord.*

Most patriots support military action against any attackers of our country. But Scripture tells us that taking vengeance is actually *stealing from God* because He clearly said that it belongs to Him, not us! This action is probably viewed by the patriot as *bending all the force of his understanding, and directing all his thoughts and actions, to the good of his country.*

▲ If patriotism demands that we take vengeance... *it is sinful*. If non-resistance and nationalistic interests can be successfully married, then perhaps a Christian can also be a patriot.

9.

Patriotism is Brotherhood

When we align ourselves so strongly with our countrymen, rather than our brethren in Christ, we place ourselves in league with atheists, blasphemers and adulterers and we are definitely unequally yoked. Our interests are divided, and we are pulled away from spiritual interests. Our thoughts revolve around the good of the country, both home and abroad. As our allegiance to country grows deeper, our allegiance to God grows weaker. Perhaps our concern is for our neighbor’s physical welfare more than his spiritual welfare. His carnal interests become our interests, because we have that common bond.

▲ If our patriotism causes us to be unequally yoked with unbelievers, *it is sinful*. If, somehow, it does not cause us to be yoked unequally, then perhaps it all right to be a patriot.

Pride is sinful, but so is false confidence in our nation’s might. We recall how God punished David for counting his armies...because it showed he trusted in his own strength.

10. Patriotism, For Some, Misplaces Priorities

Again, we think of zealous men who epitomize patriotism, and see that country appears to take priority and precedence over God. President John Adams said: “*Swim or sink, live or die, survive or perish with my country was my unalterable determination.*” Many appear to place country first, family second and God last. We must be very careful to place God first.

▲ If our patriotism causes us to place God behind country...*it is sinful*. If we have our priorities straight, then perhaps a Christian can be a patriot.

11. Patriots Get Caught Up In Political and Social Fervor

Satan loves to get us side-tracked, even on good and wholesome things. Anything that diverts our minds and our attentions from serving God is sinful.

Romans 8:6-9 For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God. But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.

In addition to thinking evil, being *carnally minded* includes being consumed with the day to day affairs of life. To that extent, if we are consumed with the affairs of the country, wars and rumors of wars, then we are carnally minded and mind not the things of God. Satan has our interests divided, and that is a victory for him.

▲ If patriotism becomes the topic of our thoughts and conversation and displaces spiri-

tual matters...*it is sinful*. If we can discipline our minds toward the spiritual rather than the carnal we can be a Christian—but can we be a true patriot “*who bends all the force of his understanding, and directs all his thoughts and actions, to the good of his country?”*

12. Patriotism Promotes Bearing Arms and Taking Human Life

As Christians, we profess non-resistance. As Christians, we conscientiously object to taking human life, hating our enemies and fighting. A few key passages pertaining to the idea of patriotism follow below:

Matthew 26:51 And, behold, one of them which were with Jesus (Peter) stretched out his hand, and drew his sword, and struck a servant of the high priest's, and smote off his ear. Then said Jesus unto him, Put up again thy sword into his place: for all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword.

John 18:36 Jesus answered, My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence.

Luke 6:27-36 But I say unto you which hear, Love your enemies, do good to them which hate you, 28 Bless them that curse you, and pray for them which despitefully use you. And unto him that smiteth thee on the one cheek offer also the other; and him that taketh away thy cloke forbid not to take thy coat also. But love ye your enemies, and do good, and lend, hoping for nothing again; and your reward shall be great, and ye shall be the children of the Highest: for he is kind unto the unthankful and to the evil. Be ye therefore merciful, as your Father also is merciful.

Romans 12:17-19 Recompense to no man evil for evil. Provide things honest in the sight of all men. If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men.

These passages clearly indicate the non-violent nature of the Christian. But, does this mean the Christian is passive? Not at all. We are to be *active* in fighting **evil** with **good**. This is clearly shown by Paul:

Romans 12:20-21 *Therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head. **Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.***

▲ If patriotism causes us to hate our enemies, take human life, and directly violates Scripture...*it is sinful*. If it does not cause us to bear arms or take human life, then perhaps we can be a patriot “with an asterisk.”

Having considered these 12 points regarding patriotism, we borrow a line from the Apostle Paul and ask that you “judge in yourselves” whether a Christian can be patriotic? Can he do so without having divided loyalties or marked conflicts? Again, the answer is, “it depends.”

- It depends upon us re-writing the definition of patriotism to fit our beliefs.
- It depends on our qualifying “this point” and de-emphasizing “that point.”
- It depends on whether we want to be associated with others who obviously have different beliefs & values.
- It depends on whether our true allegiances are in this life or the life to come.
- It depends on whether we can be *patriots* and still be *pilgrims*.

If we are patriots, we have given our allegiance to this country. Again, an allegiance is defined, in the patriotic sense, as “*to bind; the duty of being loyal to one’s government or country.*” The crux of the issue is that the Christian is a citizen of this earthly kingdom, but more so, we are citizens of a heavenly kingdom! Praise God! We must be careful to see ourselves as pilgrims who are just wandering through this world, looking for a city eternal. To that end, it matters not whether he CAN be a patriot, but whether he SHOULD be a patriot.

Ways to *Love and Zealously Support Our Country* as a Christian

The quandary that faces Christians is a desire to love our country, but not be willing to die for it. So we offer a few ways in which we can express what we feel in our hearts about this country.

1. By Praying

Become a prayer warrior. Early Church Father Tertullian was urged by a pagan named Celsus to fight for the king for justice. His answer is well worth our consideration:

“...To this, our answer is that we do give help to kings when needed. But this is, so to speak, divine help, “*putting on the whole armor of God.*” And we do this in obedience to the commandment of the Apostle: “I exhort, therefore, that first of all supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgiving be made for all men; for kings and for all who are in authority.” So the more anyone excels in godliness, the more effective the help that he renders to kings. This is a greater help than what is given by soldiers who go forth to fight and kill as many of the enemy as they can.

“And to those who demand us to bear arms for the commonwealth and to slay men, we reply: “Do not those who are the priests at certain shrines...keep their hands free from blood, so they may offer the appointed sacrifices to your gods with unstained hands that are free from human

These passages clearly indicate the non-violent nature of the Christian. But, does this mean the Christian is passive? Not at all. We are to be active in fighting evil with good.

blood? Even when war is upon you, you never enlist the priests in the army. If, then, that is the praiseworthy custom, how much more so that—when others are engaged in battle—Christians engage as the priests and ministers of God, keeping their hands pure. For they wrestle in prayers to God on behalf of those who are fighting in a righteous cause, and for the king who reigns righteously. They pray that whatever is opposed to those who act righteously may be destroyed....

“...Indeed, we do not fight under him even if he demands it. Yet, we fight on his behalf, forming a special army—an army of godliness—by offering our prayers to God....

“...And Christians are benefactors of their country more than others. For they train up citizens and inculcate piety to a Supreme Being. And they promote to a heavenly city those whose lives in the smallest cities have been good and worthy.”

In addition to these areas of prayer, we should fervently pray that God will truly “bless America.” We should pray that God will “heal our land.”

2 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.

That requires that we first pray for *repentance!* We should also pray that God’s will be done by our leaders, and that peace be restored upon the earth.

2. By Living Godly Lives

Tertullian noted that, “the more anyone excels in godliness, the more effective the help that he renders to kings.” In context of that statement, we can see how our prayers would be more effectual if we excelled in godliness. But living godly helps us to *zealously support our country* in other ways:

- By not speaking evil of dignitaries
- By obeying the laws of the land
- By not displaying a rebellious spirit:
 - ✓ respectful toward authorities
 - ✓ not undermining public confidence, through slander and defamation of our leaders
- By publicly ascribing glory to God, the one whom our nation is under
- By truly appreciating the sacrifice of others who selflessly give of themselves on our behalf
- By thanking God daily, and never taking for granted our blessings
- By appreciating the freedom we have been granted to do God’s will and good pleasure
- By being grateful for a country God graciously gave to us...because He gives good gifts
- By resolving to always serve, praise, and worship Him even if this country and freedom are taken away
- By purposing in our heart to love our enemies and return good for evil
- By being a good steward of these manifold blessings
- By loving God (the giver of the gift) with all our mind, soul, and being, more than the gift itself

Conclusion: Christian Patriotism—Redefined

If we apply the definition of *patriot* spiritually, it would read:

“One who loves and zealously supports his own country—Heaven.”

Like Paul, we could say without reserve, “*For our conversation (i.e., commonwealth) is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour; the Lord Jesus Christ*” (Philippians 3:20). That, my friends, is a country and homeland worth “loving and zealously supporting.” In the truest sense of the word *patris*, it is the “FATHERland.” That definition of patriotism is *not sinful*, but blessed. □

DIRK WILLEMS

1569

A beautiful testimony of nonresistance
taken from *The Martyrs Mirror*.



In the year 1569 a pious, faithful brother and follower of Jesus Christ, named Dirk Willems, was apprehended at Asperen, in Holland, and had to endure severe tyranny from the papists (Roman Catholics.) But as he had founded his faith not upon the drifting sand of human commandments, but upon the firm foundation stone, Christ Jesus, he, notwithstanding all evil winds of human doctrine, and heavy showers of tyrannical and severe persecution, remained immovable and steadfast unto the end; wherefore, when the chief Shepherd shall appear in the clouds of heaven and gather together His elect from all the ends of the earth, he shall also through grace hear the words, "Well done, good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things; enter thou into the joy of thy Lord." I Pet. 5:4; Matt. 24:31; 25:23.

Concerning his apprehension, it is stated by trustworthy persons, that when he fled he was hotly pursued by a

thief-catcher, and as there had been some frost, said Dirk Willems ran before over the ice, getting across with considerable peril. The thief-catcher following him broke through, when Dirk Willems, perceiving that the former was in danger of his life, quickly returned and aided him in getting out, and thus saved his life. The thief catcher wanted to let him go, but the burgo-master, very sternly called to him to consider his oath, and thus he was again seized by the thief-catcher, and, at said place, after severe imprisonment and great trials proceeding from the deceitful papists, put to death at a lingering fire by these bloodthirsty, ravening wolves, enduring it with great steadfastness, and confirming the genuine faith of the truth with his death and blood, as an instructive example to all pious Christians of this time, and to the everlasting disgrace of the tyrannous papists.

NOTE: In this connection, it is related as true from the trustworthy memoirs of those who were present at the death

of this pious witness of Jesus Christ, that the place where this offering occurred was without Asperen, on the side of Leerdam, and that, a strong east wind blowing that day, the kindled fire was much driven away from the upper part of his body, as he stood at the stake; in consequence of which this good man suffered a lingering death, insomuch that in the town of Leerdam, towards which the wind was blowing, he was heard to exclaim over seventy times, "O my Lord; my God," etc., for which cause the judge or bailiff, who was present on horseback, filled with sorrow and regret at the man's sufferings, wheeled about his horse, turning his back toward the place of execution, and said to the executioner, "Dispatch the man with a quick death." But how or in what manner the executioner then dealt with this pious witness of Jesus, I have not been able to learn, except only, that his life was consumed by the fire, and that he passed through the conflict with great steadfastness,

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REVIVAL TERMINOLOGY

in History

by Richard Owen Roberts

A number of years ago in a book entitled *Revival* I gave the following definition of that term: “*Revival is an extraordinary work of the Spirit of God producing extraordinary results.*” While that phrase conveys the fundamental concept of revival, over the intervening years I have come to the conviction that one single word describes revival better than any other—that word is “GOD.”

There is a very precious sense in which revival is literally “GOD in the midst of His people.” His manifest presence produces all that is desirable in revival. The absence of His manifest presence accounts for all that is undesirable during the seasons of moral and spiritual decline that precede revivals.

Revival is a time when heaven comes closer to earth than at any other time in the lives of men and women. If

one considers the greatest attraction of heaven, is it golden streets? Is it the tree of life? Is it the presence of angels? Is it fellowship with other redeemed? NO! The greatest allure of heaven is the absolutely unbroken presence of God.

So, too, the most fearful aspect of hell is not the fire that is never quenched, the worm that never dies, the agonies that never cease, the evil that reigns unbridled—the

most awful aspect of hell is that God is never there. Think of it! After a billion years in hell the sinner still has no hope that God will ever come, even for a moment.

While these are valid definitions and statements about revival, they are nowhere near comprehensive. Through the years, the descriptive language used to portray revival has been very broad and instructive. Please consider some of the names and nomenclature used by our fathers and brothers to describe this precious work. Let me group the more than sixty titles I am aware of under sixteen headings.

Awakening

Historically, this term has been used interchangeably with the term revival. In the eighteenth century, for instance, the work in the United Kingdom was called "The Evangelical Revival," whereas its counterpart in America was dubbed "The Great Awakening." But in recent years there has been a wise attempt on the part of many thoughtful believers to use the word "revival" to describe the work among God's people and the term "awakening" to describe the effect of a "revived people" on the world of sinners, in other words, when many believers are revived many unregenerate are awakened.

Various movements of the Spirit of God have been described as "An Awakening," "A Religious Awakening,"

"The Awakening that Must Come," and "The Awakening and Conversion of Many." What precious truth is portrayed in each of these terms, but especially in the last!

Fire

Doubtless connected with what occurred at Pentecost, when cloven tongues of fire rested on each believer (Acts 2:3), the word fire has been used in a significant number of ways to describe revival. Notice that each of these expressions conveys something distinct and significant: "The Baptism of Fire," "Fire From Heaven," "Fire on the Earth," and "Flames of Fire." Persons touched by revival have been spoken of as "Ablaze for God," and in reporting the coming of Christ among His people it has often been said: "The Fire Fell." Clearly, the purging that occurs during seasons of revival is most excellently represented by this term "fire."

Fullness

A proverb describes the backslider as one who is filled again with his own ways (Prov. 14:14.) What can be said of individuals must also be said of churches, for surely many of them are filled with themselves. A true revival

must certainly empty people of themselves and refill them with Christ. Thus, to describe revival as "A People Saturated With God" is among the most wonderful of all the labels attached to this special work. Likewise, "The Church Filled with All the Fullness of God" is an equally expressive and attractive term.

Glory

When Moses asked God to show him His glory, God took Him back into the mountain and caused all His goodness to pass before him (Ex. 33:17-23.) The remarkable effect on Moses was seen in his shining

There is a very precious sense in which revival is literally *ì*GOD in the midst of His people.*î* His manifest presence produces all that is desirable in revival.

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trays the manifest presence of Christ among His people in revival. Consider the delightful expressions that have been used to portray this aspect of revival: "Glory Filled the Land," "A Gracious Manifestation of God's Glory," "They Saw His Glory," and "The Whole Earth Was Filled with His Glory." Such expressions most certainly excite the believing heart to desire and expect the repetition of such "Glory Days" once again.

Judgment

While most of the titles I draw to your attention are very up-beat, the expression “Revival is Like Judgment Day,” is of a very different nature. And yet, it too conveys a most significant aspect of the work of God in revival. Because numerous individual believers and many corporate entities have failed to judge themselves and put away their sins, revival, when it comes, will be like the Day of Judgment for them. But even here the grace of God is evident for He Himself provides a season of cleansing in revival which, while often very severe, results in blessed restoration to usefulness.

Outpouring

Isaiah pled with God to rend the heavens and to come down (Isa. 64:1.) Our current scene is readily depicted by a vast layer of heavy clouds between heaven and earth. The idea of God taking His mighty hand and parting these clouds and then tipping the heavenly vats of divine mercy and pouring fresh graces upon the land is very attractive. Through the years numerous expressions have captured this aspect of revival including: “The Outpouring of the Holy Spirit,” “The Pouring Out of the Holy Spirit From On High,” “A Remarkable Outpouring,” and “An Outpouring of the Spirit of Grace.” My favorite phrase in this category is that old

Puritan expression, “A Plentiful Effusion of Divine Grace.”

Pentecost

Of all the records of revival contained in the sacred pages of the Book of God, none reaches such heights and endures to such lengths as the precious outpouring of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost (Acts 2:1-47.) Is it any wonder faithful believers through the ages have longed for “A Modern Pentecost,” and have time after time pled, “Do it again, Lord, do it again?”

Power

A wayward church is a powerless church. Paul informed Timothy of the eighteen thieves of power that left some in his day with “the form of godliness but denying the power thereof.” (II Tim. 3:1-5) A season of revival is a time when power is gloriously renewed. We need not be surprised then that such seasons have been described as “Power From On High,” and “Miraculous Power in the Church.”

Progress or Success

During the present time of moral and spiritual declension, the church is daily losing ground to the world. Each false convert that is added to an already adulterated work adds to the decline and hastens its pace. We have already reached that point where the

negative impact of those who profess to be Christians and either are not or are badly backslidden is greater than the positive impact of those who profess to be Christians and truly are. Thus, the church is going backward instead of forward. Oh for the day when God once again works so mightily that His labors are described as “The Present Progress of the Gospel”, or “The Remarkable Success of the Work of God”, a blessed time when salvation runs across the land as a rushing mighty river.

Rain

The days preceding revival are often pictured as dry and parched. God Himself speaks of withholding the rain (Amos 4:7) and sending the drought to a stiff-necked people who have turned away from Him (Hag. 1:11.) Thus, expressions suggesting rain are very popular during seasons of revival. Think of the lovely prospect of “Heavenly Showers.” Or contrast the concepts of “Mercy Drops” with “Showers of Blessing.” What could be more delightful than the outlook of “Rain From Heaven?” Especially meaningful is Joel’s term, “The Latter Rain.” (Joel 2:23) Having passed through the most wretched plague of locusts accompanied by a terrible drought, the prospect of God Himself advancing the rainy season so that the crops are plentiful enough to make up for the years the locusts have eaten is lovely indeed.

Reformation

This splendid term adds a feature of major consequence to our understanding of revival. Just as we have learned to distinguish between “Experience Centered Revivals” and “Word Centered Revivals,” so too we need to see the added dimension that reformation brings to the entire concept. A revival that merely revives the existing structures will fall far short of that which is needed. A return to biblical center, the recovery of lost biblical truths, the restoration of genuine Christian principles, these are musts. Reformation without revival cannot accomplish these things. Revival without reformation will not do so. Oh, for “A Twentieth Century Reformation!”

Refreshing

Our fathers spoke of “Times of Refreshing from the Presence of the Lord.” (Acts 3:19.) Many a weary worker longs for such a blessing. Many a tired church needs just such a season. The “nearness of God is our good” (Ps. 73:28) and the prospect of His drawing close again carries with it the most wonderful prospect of refreshing.

Renewal

How many dreary days of winter does it require before people begin to yearn for the renewal that comes in the spring time? How deep does

the snow have to lie on the ground and how often does it need to be replenished before the prospects of green grass and leafy trees become an anxious longing? As surely as spring marks the end of winter, “Spiritual Renewal” marks the end of the winter season of the soul. It is to be more passionately longed for than any person suffering from “cabin fever” ever yearned for spring.

Visitation

Those that erroneously suppose that God is never nearer or farther away from His Church might have little appreciation for this special term, but consider the numerous ways the concept of God visiting His people has been used in connection with revival in the past: “Days of the Right Hand of the Most High,” “A Divine Visitation,” “Then God Came,” “God Drawing Near,” “God in the Midst of His People,” “Heaven Came Down,” “The Manifest Presence of God,” “Rent Heavens,” and “A Visitation from On High.”

Wind

Numerous accounts of revival have included mention of “The Wind of the Spirit.” Some have reported “The Stirrings of God in the Mulberry Branches,” others

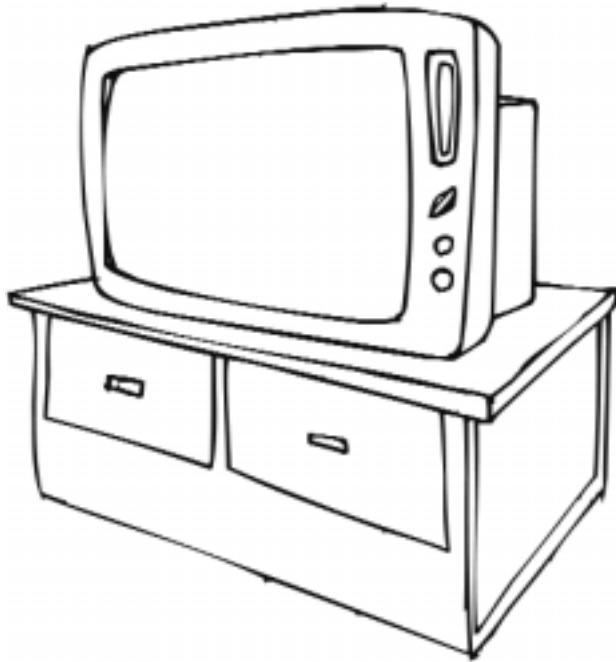
“The Gentle Breeze of God’s Spirit,” and still others “The Rustling of the Grass as God Breathes New Life Into His Church.”

Work

While many unwise men have confused their work with God’s—some even supposing successful evangelism to be revival—others have learned to describe evangelism as that which we do for God and revival as that which God does for us. Thus, through the ages men have depicted revival as “God’s Work,” “A Glorious Work of God,” “A Gracious Work,” “A Remarkable Work,” “A Surprising Work of God,” “That Wonderful Work of God,” and “The Late Happy Work of the Spirit of God.” It was these descriptions that led me to define revival as “An Extraordinary Work of the Spirit of God Producing Extraordinary Results.”

Thank God, no matter what terms are used to describe it, revival is always God’s gift to His returning people. It only comes when He sends it. He only sends it when His people need it. Surely we His people need it now. We can and we must join the Psalmist in pleading, “*Turn us again, O God, and cause Thy face to shine; and we will be saved.*” (Ps. 80:3) □

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Compromise Testimony

Little children, keep yourselves from idols. Amen. (John 5:21)

I thank God that I was raised in a home without the influence of television. However, at the age of sixteen, I started watching a few movies when visiting our next door neighbor. Needless to say, we would get glued to the screen, and during the next few days the scenes we had seen basically consumed our thought life as we went about our duties and we would talk about the movies with each other. Deep down in, we knew it was taking us down the wrong road.

I truly sensed the call of God from an early age in my

life—at times it was stronger than other times. And deep down in, my greatest desire was to truly be born again, and really know it. So after one such evening of watching a movie, my brother Ray and I made a covenant together that we won't go watch another one. Approximately two months later, we surrendered our lives to the call of Christ after a Sunday service where the Holy Ghost had powerfully anointed the messages, directly to our hearts. What an agonizing but glorious experience! We were transformed, bless His

holy name! Everything changed—my goals, my thoughts, priorities, relationships, etc. That night, the Lord poured out His Spirit on me and gave me a love for Him, His Word, His people, and the lost, like I never dreamed could exist. The half had not been told!

My oldest brother Fred never got saved, and as time went by, he left home. Of course, one of the first things he bought was a TV set. When we would be in the area where he lived, we would spend the night at his house. I remember this one certain evening when he begged me to watch this supposedly harmless, funny western film with him, which I did. Afterwards, feeling heavy, I went to the bedroom to get quiet before God and to pray. And I quickly realized that it was hard to pray, and I realized as well, that this is getting between my relationship with Christ. I begged the Lord to help me be true to Him, and told Him that I wanted His relationship above all else. At the age of twenty, most of my family moved far away, and I went along. Two years later, in 1997, I returned to where I grew up for a visit.

At one point of my stay I worked for my brother Ray's in-laws, doing construction. They had two houses rented side by side where they and the workers lived, most of the workers being relatives

of theirs. Of course, the houses were furnished with cable TV. They were a sincere family from a conservative Mennonite background, but now felt they had much deeper insight than most church-going Christians. I had a lot of respect for them, especially Frank, who was my boss. As time passed, I quickly became uneasy with how freely the TV was being used, and usually made myself scarce after supper was over and the dishes were washed, going to my room to spend time in the Word and prayer. After a while, I realized they had taken notice of my general avoidance of the screen, and Frank brought his concern to me, wondering how my relationship was with Christ, and if I understood the Gospel? With tears, I told him I do have a relationship with Christ, etc. To make a long story short, in 1999, I found myself back in the same area, relating with the same family, as they were staying with my brother Ray.

At different times, I was roundly reprimanded by them for self-righteousness, legalism, “old fashioned Phariseism,” etc.—some of the evidences being that I did not want to watch TV, and that (according to them) I liked to spend time in the Word and prayer because it made me “feel good.” I did not have much to say about this, if anything, and just took it to the Lord. I remember stepping in the door one evening after

work, and Frank unloaded a mirage of such-like concerns for me. After he finished, I said “good-night” and went out to my sleeping quarters. Needless to say, sleep was out of the question for a good while. Even though, by this time, I did not have much con-

I could not find any reproof from God for avoiding TV and spending time in the Word and prayer.

fidence in the spirit and direction I saw him and his family going, I felt the need to receive to heart the concerns and reproof, and not be too quick to “pitch” them, even though they came from people that I did not have much confidence in. Realizing that I will never be totally immune from any of those accusations while in this body, I opened my heart to God that night and begged Him to search my heart, and to help me figure out what all this turmoil and confusion was about, asking Him to cleanse me from any and all self-righteousness, etc. However, I could not find any reproof from God for avoiding TV and spending time in the Word and prayer. Rather, I sensed this difficult time was God’s providence for more purifying and soul-searching in my life.

My younger brother Joseph had just gotten saved that year and was now courting the youngest daughter of Frank. One day, they asked me to watch a “Christian” testimony video of some women,

which I did. Some of it was good, but then it went into such visual description of her past life, romantic episodes, etc., etc., that they had to fast-forward it. I strongly felt the Spirit of the Lord grieving within. Afterward, I sat down with them and shared my concern about such “Christian Videos,” reading from Ephesians 5:12: “For it is a shame even to speak of those things which are done of them in secret.” As well, I shared other similar thoughts.

They justified these videos saying that this “is just the reality most people live in” and “others need to see it, so they can also be delivered,” etc. At a later time, I was again called on the rug by Frank, who had found out the concern I had, through his daughter and Joseph. That October of 1999 found me working in the apple harvest. Joseph and I were living with my oldest brother, Fred, in his little trailer. (All three of us were single.) One beautiful fall evening, I stopped at Ray’s place on my way home from work. His in-laws were there, and after chatting and saying “good-byes,” Frank walked with me out to my car. As I crawled into my car, he encouraged me to be open with them as to how it was going in my relationship with the Lord. He informed me that he thought he saw growth in me lately, but thought I should know that his daughter had recently been working with a

neighbor girl who also knew me, and in the course of the conversation, they began talking about me (and my peculiarities, I guess.) Anyways, this girl had made the statement that, "Yeah, David (me) is just too good." So he told me that I should take it to heart, as they are not the only ones that feel that way.

I felt totally undone, and told him that after all Christ has done for me, all I can say is that I'm awfully sorry for any way that I may have brought shame to His name. As I drove home to my brother's trailer, a deep sadness and heaviness settled over me; I felt I was in a whirlpool of confusion where everything seemed foggy and grey. My brothers were not home yet when I walked into the trailer, and after a bite to eat I retired early. We had tight quarters, so I slept in Fred's bedroom on a little mat behind his bed. I was very exhausted and sad as I went to bed, and as I tried to pray before going to sleep it seemed almost the only thing that would come was, "Oh Lord, I don't know what is going on, but I am very sad." And so I drifted to sleep. Suddenly, I awoke in the middle of the night singing:

*This is all my hope and peace,
Nothing but the blood of Jesus.
This is all my righteousness,
Nothing but the blood of Jesus.
Oh, precious is the flow.*

And being overwhelmed with the joy of the Lord, I said, "Oh Lord, what is going on? How can it be that I went to

bed so sad, and now so much joy?" I rolled over and went to sleep almost immediately. Suddenly, I began dreaming. I dreamed that it was dark outside, but I was in a room where there was plenty of light, and a lot of people strolling about the room visiting. Suddenly, I was hit with a burden from the Lord and jumped onto a box in the middle of the room, and these were the words that poured out of the burden and anguish of my soul: "Oh, don't you all realize that the television is among the many end-time deceptions?" Upon hearing this, some people began to walk out the door into the dark, and some stayed in.

Immediately, I awoke singing the third verse of "Trust and Obey." Full of joy and the Holy Ghost, I looked at the digital clock and it was 5:00 A.M. (My rising time.) The Spirit of the Lord said, "Get up and go open your Bible at random, and read where your eyes fall. I have a message for you." I jumped out of bed and hurried quietly as possible to the bathroom (where I was accustomed to having my quiet time, so as to not disturb my brothers.) I flipped the light on and, trembling, knelt down. As my Bible dropped open on the toilet seat, immediately my eyes fell on these words:

"But if not, be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up." (Daniel 3:18)

I exclaimed, "Oh! That is what it is! It is idolatry!" I went to work that morning with an open heaven over me, full of joy and peace and the Holy Ghost. Those apple trees very likely never experienced such a worship service, as I flitted up and down my ladder, picking their luscious fruit and worshipping our Creator, from the bottom of my heart. From time to time, I wanted to sing "Trust and Obey" throughout the day, but I did not know it by heart, and all I could remember was that I was singing the third line when I awoke that morning. This made me wonder what the verses actually said. That evening after work, I drove past my Grandpa's house and stopped in for a short visit. Only my Grandma was home (a dear, godly Grandmother she is!). Before leaving, one of us suggested singing a hymn together before parting. She asked if I had a song on my heart, and I said, "Oh, yes! Let's sing "Trust and Obey." She brought out the "Christian Hymnal," and as we came to the third verse it suddenly hit me: Oh what a powerful message that contains! (Bless the Lord, oh my soul!)

*But we never can prove,
The delights of His love,
Until all on the altar we lay;
For the favor He shows,
And the joy He bestows,
Are for them who will trust and obey.
Amen!*

I can testify in the name of Jesus Christ, that if we will put

all on the altar, and trust Him and obey Him, the blessings just flow. There is more I could share, but I feel to keep it short. In closing, I think we do well to remember that under the Old Covenant, when the people of Israel started to cool off, one of the first signs that began to show up was idolatry, which seemed to provoke the wrath and jealousy of God quicker than most any other sin, if I am not mistaken. It is still the same today, under the New Covenant, only the idols that are constantly vying for the worship of God's people now-a-days are, for the most part, quite nice looking "idols." And sadly, "iniquity is abounding and the love of many is waxing cold." We can count on it, if and when our love begins to wax cold, idolatry will begin to creep up on us, and we will finally go down the road of apostasy and grieve the Holy Spirit away and never wake up to reality until it is too late. Remember Samson. He knew not that the Spirit of God had left him, until he was bound and could not break his fetters; and thus it was too late!

We must remember that we live in a pleasure and entertainment-crazed age, and this spirit has been spilling over into the Church. Well did the Apostle Paul prophesy of the apostasy of the last days in 2 Timothy 3:1-5. One of the first characteristics is covetousness (which is idolatry) and one of the last being "lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God." These people will even have a

form of godliness, but deny the power thereof. There is a whole list of idols that I could list that are good at causing God's people to stumble and bow down, but I am sure I could not even name them all. So, I'll just name a few that I feel would be somewhere at the top of the list:

- > Self-love
- > Money and materialism
- > Entertainment and music
- > Praise of men
- > Pastimes and hobbies
- > The "good life"
- > Eating and drinking and building

...all of which tend to be the robber of the excellent and anointed life.

The best safeguard is to maintain a close and loving walk with Jesus Christ, and a love for His Word, which call for self-denial and cross-bearing. And, to live under the anointing and dictates of the Holy Ghost, and fellowship with those that do the same. Thus, as those "attractive idols" ask for our homage and time, with God's help they will be shown up for the hideous or vain monsters that they really are.

2 Chronicles 16:9 says: *For the eyes of the LORD run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to shew himself strong in the behalf of them whose heart is perfect toward him.* God is still looking for men and women, young and old, who will stand for the good and right, with Shadrach, Meschach and Abednego, even while the majority are falling down and

worshipping the statue. Yes, you may feel all alone, or like an odd-ball, sometimes. You will suffer reproach, etc., but if it is for the name of Christ, He will show Himself strong on your behalf, and His Glory will settle down over you. All idols need to be torn and broken-down spiritually, but some call for spiritual and literal breaking. Oh, the burnings that true revival so often brings! If God is dealing with you on the TV set, please do not sell it; fix it once for all with a huge wrench or sledgehammer, in the name of Jesus.

In closing, let us hear the warning plea, from the last verse of 1 John, the apostle with a special gift of love. *Little children, keep yourselves from idols. Amen.* Could it be that John referred to idolatry using the following definition? "Any person, place or thing that diverts love and devotion from Jesus Christ."

*Written in weakness,
an unworthy,
but grateful servant*

P.S. Yes, we need to be alert for the dangers of self-righteousness, Phariseism, legalism, etc., but let us not react from one ditch and fall into the ditch on the other side. The Highway of Holiness is strait and narrow, and the key to staying on it is to love the Lord with all our might, heart, soul and strength, and our neighbor as ourselves, humbling ourselves under the mighty hand of God. □

Superficial Revival

by Charles G. Finney
1790-1875

I recently came across a small, scarce collection of letters written by Charles Finney toward the end of his life. They are exhortations concerning his perspective of the growing superficiality of church life and revival meetings around the year 1870. As I read, I could not help but mourn over the state of the church as we now experience it 130 years later. It takes little imagination to figure what his response would be to the rock bands, comedy routines, T-shirt sales and empty conversions that typify “revival meetings” of our day.

It is my prayer that this timeless reprimand will spur us in returning not only to the revival fire of the 1830’s, but further still, until the Book of Acts becomes our reality in this day. Below is an excerpt from this collection. --Dean Taylor

I have observed, and multitudes of others also I find have observed, that for the last ten years, revivals of religion have been gradually becoming more and more superficial. All the phenomena which they exhibit testify to this as a general fact. There is very much less deep conviction of sin and deep breaking up of the heart; much less depth of humility, and much less strength in all the graces exhibited by converts in late revivals, than in the converts

from the revivals which occurred about 1830 and 1831 and for some time previous. I have observed, as have others also, that revivals are of much shorter duration, and that a reaction comes on much more suddenly and disastrously than formerly. Also, that fewer of the converts make stable and efficient Christians; that those who do persevere, appear to have less of the Spirit of Christ than in former revivals—not so much of the spirit of prayer, and are not so

modest and humble. In short, all the phenomena of the more recent revivals, judging from my own experience and observation and from the testimony of other witnesses, show that they have at least very extensively, taken on a much less desirable type than formerly.

Christians are much less spiritual in revivals, much less prevalent in prayers, not so deeply humbled and quickened and thoroughly baptized with the Holy Ghost as they were formerly. These statements I do not suppose to be universally applicable to modern revivals, but I do believe them to be applicable generally. As revivals now exist, I believe ministers are not nearly as desirous of seeing them in their congregations as they formerly were, nor have they good reason to be. Those ministers who have witnessed none but the later revivals of which I speak, are almost afraid of revivals. They have seen the disastrous results of modern revivals so frequently, that they honestly entertain the doubt whether they are, upon the whole, desirable. Those, as I have good reason to know, who saw the revivals which occurred ten or twenty years ago, greatly prefer revivals of that type. They are distressed with the superficiality of many recent revivals. I make this as a general, not a universal remark, and state only my own opinion of public sentiment. I have often heard it said, both among ministers and private Christians, “We long to see the days return when we shall

have such revivals as we saw years ago." I have been anxiously watching the progress of things in this direction, and inquiring as carefully and prayerfully as I could into the causes which are operating to produce these results. If I am not misinformed, and have not greatly misapprehended the case, the following will be found among them:

1. There is much less probing of the heart by a deep and thorough exhibition of human depravity, than was formerly the case. It has been of late a common remark, and a brother who has long labored as an evangelist made the same remark, that for the last few years there has been little or no opposition made by impenitent sinners to revivals. Now it is not because the carnal mind is not still enmity against God, but I greatly fear it is for the want of turning up to the light the deep foundations of this enmity in their hearts. The unutterable depravity of the human heart has not, I fear, been laid open to the very bottom as it formerly was. A few sermons on the subject of moral depravity are generally preached in every revival, but I fear this is by no means the great theme of the preaching so much and so long as it ought to be, in order thoroughly to break up the fallow ground of the sinner's and the professor's heart. From my own experience and observation, as well as from the Word of God, I am

fully convinced that the character of revivals depends very much upon the stress that is laid upon the depravity of the heart. Its pride, enmity, windings, deceitfulness, and everything else that is hateful to God, should be exposed in the light of His perfect law.

2. I fear that stress enough is not laid upon the horrible guilt of this depravity. Pains enough is not taken, by a series of pointed and cutting discourses, to show the sinner the utter inexcusableness, the

the Holy Ghost, they are greatly ashamed of themselves. Until they manifest deep shame, it should be known that the probe is not used sufficiently, and they do not see themselves as they ought. When I go into a meeting of inquiry and look over the multitudes, if I see them with heads up, looking at me and at each other, I have learned to understand what work I have to do. Instead of pressing them immediately to come to Christ, I must go to work to convict them of sin. Generally, by looking over the

Christians are much less spiritual in revivals, much less prevalent in prayers, not so deeply humbled and quickened and thoroughly baptized with the Holy Ghost as they were formerly.

unutterable wickedness and guilt, of his base heart. No revival can be thorough until sinners and backsliders are so searched and humbled, that they can not hold up their heads. It is a settled point with me, that while backsliders and sinners can come to an anxious meeting, and hold up their heads and look you and others in the face without blushing and confusion, the work of searching is by no means performed, and they are in no state to be thoroughly broken down and converted to God. I wish to call the attention of my brethren especially to this fact.

When sinners and backsliders are really convicted by

room, a minister can tell, not only who are convicted and who are not, but who are so deeply convicted as to be prepared to receive Christ.

Some are looking around, and manifest no shame at all; others can not look you in the face, and yet can hold up their heads; others still can not hold up their heads, and yet they are silent; others, by their sobbing, and breathing, and agonizing, reveal at once the fact that the sword of the Spirit has wounded them to their very heart. Now, I have learned that a revival never does take on a desirable and wholesome type any further than the preaching and means are so directed, and so effi-

cient as to produce that kind of genuine and deep conviction which breaks the sinner and the backslider right down, and makes him unutterably ashamed and confounded before the Lord, until he is not only stripped of every excuse, but driven to go all lengths in justifying God and condemning himself.

3. I have thought that, at least in a great many instances, stress enough has not been laid upon the necessity of Divine influence upon the hearts of Christians and of sinners. I am confident that I have sometimes erred in this respect myself. In order to rout sinners and backsliders from their self-justifying pleas and refuges, I have laid, and I doubt not that others also have laid, too much stress upon the natural ability of sinners, to the neglect of showing them the nature and extent of their dependence upon the

held His influences. In the meantime, multitudes have been greatly excited by the means used to promote an excitement, and have obtained hopes, without ever knowing the necessity of the presence and powerful agency of the Holy Ghost. It hardly need be said that such hopes are better thrown away than kept. It were strange, indeed, if one could lead a Christian life upon the foundation of an experience in which the Holy Ghost is not recognized as having anything to do.

Premature Conversions

I have already intimated that pains enough had not been taken to search the heart and thoroughly detect and expose the sinner's depravity, so as to make him see the need of the gospel remedy. If I am not mis-

and desert of sin; to believe, before they have understood their need of Christ; to resolve to serve God, before they have at all understood what the service of God is. They have been pressed to make up their minds to enter immediately upon the service of God, and have been taught that they needed only to make a resolution to obey the Lord. Hence their religion, after all, has been only a religion of resolutions, instead of a religion of faith, and love, and of a broken heart. In short, it appears to me that, in many instances, the true ideal of what constitutes pure religion has not been developed in the mind, and that consequently spurious conversions have been distressingly numerous. I have been more and more surprised from year to year, to find how very numerous those professors of religion are who manifestly have not the true ideal of pure religion before their minds. It seems that, in many instances, the idea that love is the essence and the whole of religion, is left almost, if not entirely, out of view.

No Meat

Another cause of the decline of revivals, in my estimation, is, that a right course has not been pursued with the Churches. In some instances they have been urged to labor and visit, and put forth active efforts for the conversion of sinners, while they have had very little wholesome food to

They have been urged to repent, before they have really understood the nature and desert of sin; to believe, before they have understood their need of Christ; to resolve to serve God, before they have at all understood what the service of God is.

grace of God and the influence of His Spirit. This has grieved the Spirit of God. His work not being honored by being made sufficiently prominent, and not being able to get the glory to Himself of His own work, He has with-

taken, there has been, in many cases, an error committed in urging sinners to submission before they are prepared to understand what true submission is. They have been urged to repent, before they have really understood the nature

live upon. Much labor has been demanded with too spare a diet. They have heard very little else than mere legal preaching. Ministers have been preaching almost exclusively to the impenitent, and perhaps for months have given the Church scarcely one wholesome meal of the real gospel. If Christians are to labor for God and souls, they must be fed with a plenty of the bread that cometh down from heaven; they must be made to know and feel where their great strength lies; must have Christ, in all His offices, and relations, and fullness, frequently presented to them. If this course is not pursued, their own piety will not only greatly suffer, but they will come into a legal spirit, all their efforts for the conversion of sinners will be only bustle and legality; and in this state they may encompass sea and land to make proselytes and fill the Church with spurious converts.

If I am not entirely mistaken, this has been, to an alarming extent, the fact in revivals that have prevailed within the last few years. Christians have had so little of the gospel that they have become legal, self-righteous, blustering, carnal, mechanical, unbelieving; and their efforts have made converts like themselves; which has brought revivals into great disrepute.

Again, ministers, by preaching too exclusively to the impenitent, and dwelling so little on the marrow and fatness and fullness of the gospel, have greatly suffered

in their own piety—have themselves become, in many instances, legal, hard-hearted,

only required, but expected, to “cleanse themselves from all filthiness of the flesh and

The fact is, the Churches are going rapidly away from God because of a lack of the true bread of life; and because the ministry have, to such an alarming extent, been guarding their Churches more against the doctrine of sanctification than they have against sin.

and censorious. In this state they can not promote true revivals of religion. Not living themselves on Christ, not dwelling in God and God in them, they are in no state to feed the Church or promote true and thorough revivals of religion.

No Preaching on Holiness

I am fully persuaded that my brethren in the ministry will find it indispensable to insist on entire holiness of heart and life, as a practical attainment in this world, or they can never sustain a healthy piety in their Churches.

My dear brethren, you may try it as long as you will; but if you take any lower ground than this your Churches will backslide until you yourselves will be appalled by the result. I am perfectly satisfied, from long experience, that there is no other way but to lodge the deep impression in the Churches, that they are not

spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.” All pleading for sin, or any thing that has the practical tendency of denying the practicability of attaining this state in this life, is the greatest and most ruinous error that can be inculcated on the Churches. As said an English writer not long since, “No error is so destructive, and to be so greatly denounced, as that Christians are expected to sin during this life.”

My beloved brethren, in what I now say I am not endeavoring to win you to my opinion; but I wish to fix your attention and the attention of the Church on the fact; and to have you witness the results of inculcating any lower practical standard than that which I have named.

The fact is, the Churches are going rapidly away from God because of a lack of the true bread of life; and because the ministry have, to such an alarming extent, been guarding their Churches more against the doctrine of sanctification than they have against sin.

Church Life without Revival

Another subject on which I wish to address my brethren is, a tendency which I perceive to exist in the public mind towards a conclusion which, to me, appears little short of downright infatuation; namely, that the Churches can exist and prosper as well without revivals of religion as with them, or even better. Now this is certainly the most preposterous conclusion conceivable; and yet I really know not what else to infer from the general apathy upon the subject of revivals, and especially from the quite extensive hostility against them which is apparent in many sections of the Church. Many of the leading men in the Church seem about ready to adopt, or at least are earnestly favoring, the policy of making no efforts to promote revivals—of discountenancing the labors of evangelists, and all those extra means and efforts that have been used from time immemorial, whenever revivals have occurred.

Now that the Christian Church cannot exist without extensive revivals of religion can be clearly demonstrated; unless the Lord introduces a different mode of diffusing the gospel from any that He ever has adopted. Nay, indeed, the very supposition is absurd and self-contradictory. Must not the Church be revived? Must not religion be revived among the impenitent? If not, will not true piety well nigh

cease from the world? The nominal Church might exist, I grant, without revivals. They might introduce another half-way covenant system, or receive hosts of ungodly men into the Church without their giving any evidence of regeneration; and thus a nominal Church might be kept up; but that true piety can not exist and spread without a great and general revival of religion, and without revivals succeeding declensions as often as declensions in any portion of the Church shall occur, is, to my mind, one of the plainest truths in the world.

I am sorry that I have not the means by me of stating definitely the real results of those experiments that have been tried of promoting religion without revivals; but who does not know that, in such cases, the Churches have either become extinct or have become merely nominal Churches, having only a name to live while really dead? They have resorted to a half-way covenant, and various other means of filling up the Church from the world, without their being truly converted to God. How else could even the nominal Church exist? Christians continue to die, and die, in fact, much faster than sinners will be converted to fill their places without revivals.

I believe it to have been a universal fact that Church members have died faster than sinners have been converted to fill their places where no means have been used to promote revivals, and

where consequently they have not existed.

To what an extent revivals in this country from 1820-1840 influenced the public mind, developed reforms, and brought up as from the depth of oblivion the great truths and principles that are the sheet-anchor of every Government of opinion under heaven. The fact is, those revivals affected all classes of the community. They affected the whole country, and have extended their influence throughout all Christendom. This I have very good reason to know, not only from my acquaintance with this country, but from intelligence received from Europe.

These revivals were beginning, and indeed more than beginning, to influence the legislation of all Christendom. But let them be done away, let the generation that has witnessed their power go to their graves without the recurrence of those scenes, and what will be the result? A Government of mere opinion like ours, in the hands of a people who fear not God, with a temporizing ministry, a licentious press, and all the agencies that are at work to carry headlong all the religious institutions of the land—where are we in twenty or in fifty years without revivals of religion? Witness the efforts of the papacy, the tendencies of Puseyism the efforts of Universalists and errorists of every description, the running to and fro of lecturers on every subject, the spread of infidel books and tracts, and all the enginery of hell to overthrow

all order and law and everything that is lovely and of good report, and then say, my brethren, can the Church exist and prosper without having repeated revivals of religion in its very midst?

But to come nearer home—can we or the present Church become anything less than an abomination and a curse to the world without revivals? Whither is she tending already? Witness the gossip, the worldliness, the pride, the ambition, the everything that is hateful, growing up and prevailing in Churches, just in proportion as they are destitute of the reviving influences of the Holy Spirit. Contemplate the cowardice, the trimming policy, the ecclesiastical ambition of the ministry, without

revivals of religion—mark how great and overcoming are their temptations to please men, and even ungodly Church members, when there are no copious outpourings of the Spirit to arouse the multitude and strengthen the hands of the servants of God.

O, it is impossible that desolation should not reign, that the ministry should not cower down before an ungodly public sentiment, that popery should not prevail, the Sabbath be desecrated, the Church ruined, and the world undone, without great revivals of religion.

And what can this policy mean, that would hush everything down, and frown on all special efforts to promote revivals? It is certainly infatu-

ation, and, if not arrested, it must end in ruin.

I beseech my brethren in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to keep as far as possible from the appearance or the thought of discountenancing or looking coldly on revival efforts. They are our life. They are the salvation of the Church, they are the hope of the world. Instead of allowing them to cease, every minister and Christian ought to aim at increasing them a hundred-fold. Every one of us ought to set his heart upon rendering them pure, deep, universal, and as frequent as the necessities of the Church and the world demand. Let no man stop short of aiming at this as he values his own soul, and the souls of his fellow men. □

continued from page 19, Dirk Willems from The Martyrs Mirror

having commended his soul into the hands of God.

As we have come into possession of the sentence which these rulers of darkness passed upon this friend of God, we have deemed it well, to add it here for the benefit of the readers, in order that reading the same, they may be able to perceive the truth of this matter.

COPY: Whereas, Dirk Willems, born at Asperen, at present a prisoner, has, without torture and iron bonds (or otherwise) before the bailiff and us judges, confessed, that at the age of fifteen, eighteen or twenty years, he was rebaptized in Rotterdam, at the house of one Pieter Willems, and that he, further, in

Asperen, at his house, at divers hours, harbored and admitted secret conventicles and prohibited doctrines, and that he also has permitted several persons to be rebaptized in his aforesaid house; all of which is contrary to our holy Christian faith, and to the decrees of his royal majesty, and ought not to be tolerated, but severely punished, for an example to others; therefore, we the aforesaid judges, having, with mature deliberation of council, examined and considered all that was to be considered in this matter, have condemned and do condemn by these presents in the name; and in the behalf, of his royal majesty, as Count of Holland,

the aforesaid Dirk Willems, prisoner, persisting obstinately in his opinion, that he shall be executed with fire, until death ensues; and declare all his property confiscated, for the benefit of his royal majesty. So done this 16th of May, in presence of the judges: Cornelis Goverts, Jan van Stege Jans, Adriaen Gerrits, Adriaen Jans, Lucas Rutgers, Jan Jans, and Jan Roefelofs, A. D., 1569.

Extracted from the records of the town of Asperen, and after collation this copy was found to agree [with the original], the 15th of October 1606. Acknowledged by me, the town clerk of Asperen. □

Charity Gospel Tape Ministry & The Heartbeat of The Remnant

July-September 2004 Financial Report



We are very blessed again and thank you for your support to meet these financial needs. The only thing we would draw your attention to is the Remnant Publishing & Mailing expense. This expense is only half covered this quarter by the Remnant Subscription Donations. As you can see in the ending balance, our needs have been met, and we heartily thank you for your support!

***Thank you
for your
continued
support!***

***God bless you
richly!***

07/01/04 Beginning Balance	\$669.21
Receipts	
Tape Ministry Donations	\$55,427.11
Remnant Subscription Donations	\$5,441.99
Total Receipts	\$60,869.10
Disbursements	
UPS & Postage	\$5,906.32
Tapes, Albums, CD's & Labels	\$20,909.54
Equipment & Software Purchases	\$234.35
Equipment Maint & Repairs	\$525.56
Mailing & Office Supplies	\$1,462.49
Rent	\$2,100.00
Telephone	\$1,247.40
Website Development & Maintenance	\$524.94
Miscellaneous	\$439.37
Payroll Expense	\$13,400.01
Books & Catalogs	\$2,122.43
Remnant Publishing & Mailing	\$10,257.26
Total Disbursements	\$59,129.67
09/30/04 Ending Balance	\$2,408.64
Difference	\$1,739.43

*For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure.
Philippians 2:13*



Precious Letters from Our Readers

We thank God for the many letters of counsel and encouragement we have been receiving. It is the only way we can evaluate our progress. Keep them coming. Our desire is to foster a free flow of edification, inspiration and burden from us to you, and you to us. This way we can pass some of the blessings on to the others who are reading. We would love to hear from you in any of the following ways:

- A meaningful lesson in family devotions that you can pass on to other fathers.
- A testimony for “The Blessing Corner” of God’s blessing in some area of obedience.
- A question that can be answered to the edification of all.
- An area of spiritual growth, obtained by one of the exercises suggested in the magazine.
- A word of encouragement or counsel about *The Remnant*, or any section of it.

Waiting to hear... --The Editors

Dear Sir,

Greetings in Jesus name. I am a young lady who lives in England. God has been working powerfully in my life through the magazine and the tape ministry. I am all alone. I have started covering my head and dressing modestly, but I have no one to fellowship with. Do you know of anyone else in England who might want to start a church like this?

England



Dear Friends,

Greetings. The latest Remnant arrived here a while back, but I wasn't able to sit and read it till today. I read it from cover to cover, and I had to write to tell you how excellent it all

was, Oh yes Lord, do it again as you have done in times past. That first article about the prophet was so enlightening; I have never had such a clear exposition of that troubling passage. I also enjoyed the stirring article on the Anabaptists.

Florida



Dear Bro Denny,

Greetings in the Lord. I just wanted to write and express my gratitude and appreciation for the tape ministry, especially the teachings on the home. Your tapes came as a Godsend from friends across the country who met a man on the side of the road in New Mexico. He gave them the tapes on The Godly Home Series, and they thought we would be interest-

ed. As I listened, the scales fell off my eyes, and a light shined in the dungeon of my heart. It has totally transformed our home. We have seven children, and we will never be the same.

A Pastor from Illinois



Dear brothers and sisters,

God has blessed the Remnant with so great and godly wisdom that I have to be careful of selfishness creeping in when opportunities arise to share mine with others. My heart was quite saddened last month when I was informed that my copy was lost somehow. God reproved me because the magazine had taken the place of Christ.

India

The House of the Lord has many chambers,
Large and lofty, or low and small;
And some who turn from the world's broad highways
And find the door to the Entrance Hall,
Are satisfied with its shade and coolness,
To know they have come to the House of a Friend,
And, resting there in the peace and quiet,
They think they have fared to their journey's end.

And some are content with the Ante-Chamber,
That opens out of the entrance hall,
With the winds that blow from the spicy gardens,
The musical splash of the fountain's fall;
They feast on the fruits of the Spirit's giving
And muse on the thought of the joys to come,
And resting there in the peace and quiet,
Are glad that the Lord has brought them home.

But those who have heeded His invitation
To come up higher and enter in
To the Upper Room of the Master's dwelling,
To stores of treasures their way shall win.
What eye hath seen them? What mind conceived them?
What heart hath dreamed of the things concealed,
The joys prepared for the Lord's beloved,
To those who seek them alone revealed?

Clothed with His glory they leave His presence,
Girt with His power they walk abroad
Who find the door to the Inner Chamber,
The secret place of the Most High God.

The Inner Chamber

by Annie J. Flint, 1866-1932

The Heartbeat of
The Remnant

Charity Christian Fellowship

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