

August 1999 The Holiness of God

by Aaron Greenway

Many of us know how the Enemy tries to distract us, get us off on tangents, cause us to be consumed with self-agendas that are not edifying. Many of us understand times of spiritual dryness or discouragement OR sin. As believers, we do not desire these things. We detest them. We yearn for revival. We long for God to do something among His people. But, when we ask God for a reviving of the soul, do we really understand what we are asking?

Many churches hold revival services. Some churches here in America measure revival by their emotions, but no true change occurs. Some churches see the work of the Holy Spirit simply operating through spiritual gifts (although this may be true, it is certainly not the first place that the Holy Spirit begins). Many churches see the move of God based on how many people show up. And many believers believe they are being used of God just because they are using their talents or abilities.

As I write this e-mail, God has and continues to answer an urgent request of mine that goes back several months now. I am just beginning to remotely understand what true revival is (and even then, lest I be prideful, I am a long way from totally understanding it). What I need is to know and understand the holiness of God. When someone in the Scripture encountered the presence of God or was being prepped for ministry, what was the first thing that happened? Did that person dance? Did that person sing? Did that person start working on a ministry game-plan? The answer? None of the above.

In every case, the holiness of God had to be made manifest. And in light of this, the sin of that person was exposed. The first thing that person did was to fall on their face. See Isaiah 6, Luke 5:1-11.

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God has to purify His people before He can use them. True revival occurs when we understand our own depravity in light of God's perfect standard. When we see this, we begin to understand why Paul said, "Woe is me. Who can deliver me from this body of death" (Romans 7:24). When we see this, we begin to see the HUGE sacrifice that Jesus paid on the cross. When we see this, we begin to comprehend that Jesus Christ is our only hope. Once we have hope, then come the ministry plans, the rejoicing and the dancing, because we are FREE.

Christ being our hope is certainly the way that a sinner sees his sin and his need for the Savior. But, I also believe that this is a continual revelation that God seeks to do in His people that we may see who we are in light of who God is, and then to go running to Jesus who is able to fill that gap.

My prayer for myself has been that I would truly see how pure and holy God is so that I can truly see how wretched and rotten I am and, in turn, cling to Jesus all the more.

God is HOLY! Infinitely HOLY! God is worthy to receive the glory due Him. He is worthy of our obedience and our praise. He desires to use us and to revive us. But are we willing to be broken? Are we willing to see God for who he is? For how we see God determines our thoughts, our actions, our attitudes, our motives, our service, and our theology. God is the central point in which all other points are derived.

As Dr. Jeff Bingham at Dallas Theological Seminary has said, "The most important thought you will ever think is what you think when you think about God because it will determine every other dimension of your existence."

I am truly humbled by this HOLY God! Where would I be without Jesus?