

The Church And Its Mission Today, Part 3



By Rev. Mike Spaulding

We often hear that “revival starts with the people of God.” That statement is true but often masks what must precede revival. Before God will bring revival in and upon His people, Christians must repent, confess, and turn from their evil ways. In other words, revival is necessary for a people that have wandered off the narrow path and have come under judgment.

The idea of revival in America has a long and storied history. From traveling evangelists to week long “tent meetings,” revival was a yearly occurrence in the lives of Christians throughout the 1940’s through 1970’s. Somewhere in the process of holding annual revival meetings, Christians made them more about evangelism than about personal repentance. This means that Christians did not do much self-reflection but instead focused on inviting friends, co-workers, and family members that they believed needed to hear the gospel.

Over the years the effectiveness of this type of outreach has waned dramatically. The need for revival in and upon the body of Christ has never been clearer though. A problem is that the

modern version of Christianity has been so distorted by false teaching, so misconstrued by a heretical breed of motivational charlatans, by the ever growing cadre of name-it-claim-it, blab-it-grab-it, mantra chattering, demon oppressed celebrity "pastors," that the body of Christ is in the miry swamplands of self-absorbed materialism, self-inflicted narcissism, and demon produced doctrines of flesh and misdirection. Sadly they do not even realize their precarious estate.

Adding to this deadly mixture of toxic modernity, today's pastors point people increasingly to a social gospel of works. Christians today spend their time and finances to feed, clothe, and house thousands of people around the world while not once even thinking to tell people about the gospel of salvation in Jesus Christ. The only lifesaving message the world has ever been given is not important enough to be made available to the very ones who are perishing for a lack of knowledge. Apparently as long as Christians feel better about themselves by having contributed to a charity or by having participated in the feeding of homeless people at the local soup kitchen everything is fine.

Nowhere in the Scriptures will you find statements that tell us to win people over by loving them. In fact you cannot love someone into a saving relationship through faith in Christ. Anyone who comes to faith in Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of their sins will do so only because they recognize their tenuous unredeemed state before a holy God. Nothing else leads to true repentance that leads to true salvation.

Modern Christianity has invented the concept of relational or friendship evangelism. Christians are now told we have to "earn the right to be heard." We are reminded that people "don't care what you have to say until they see how much you care." Here's a newsflash folks – the greatest love ever demonstrated was by Jesus Christ when He willingly endured a brutal beating by savage soldiers and death by crucifixion all the while being mocked, spit upon, and ridiculed. His response

was, "Father forgive them for they do not know what they are doing."

The point I am making here friends is this – modern Christians don't see any need for personal revival because they don't see that God's judgment is upon them and America for our obstinate refusal to bow our knee to God and confess our sin of throwing Him out of every aspect of our shared cultural life. And to further clarify the insanity that has gripped us, America now promotes Satanism and the occult in school clubs, television, movies, and government buildings in many state capitals. We live in a nation where God is not welcomed but Satan is welcomed and most Christians go about their daily affairs as if nothing is wrong with this.

Folks, the mission of the Church has become lost in America. In case you are wondering what that mission is I remind you that Christians are called to "Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I commanded you" (Matthew 28:19-20). This calling means first of all that we must go to people everywhere with the message of Jesus Christ. This message is that He is the only way to salvation and through that same faith, eternal life. It means that this process of teaching people about Jesus is discipleship. We even have the parameters of this Gospel calling in Acts 1:8 – in our Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, and outermost parts of the world. Our mission starts where we live and branches out from there as God leads.

Friends, the Church has lost its way today. The mission has been confused by a social gospel of good works. We must return to the simple message that Jesus saves. That must be our focus. When it is clarity will follow and we will see the fruit of the Gospel which is saved, redeemed, changed lives and a changed nation. We will not see revival until we see repentance and a turning from our wicked ways.

[BIO: Mike Spaulding was ordained to the ministry in 1998. Since then he has planted two Calvary Chapel churches – Calvary Christian Fellowship, St. Marys, Ohio, in 1998, and Calvary Chapel of Lima, Ohio, in 2005, where he currently serves as teaching pastor. Mike holds a B.A. in Organizational Management, a Masters Degree in Theological Studies, and a Ph.D. in apologetics.

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