

*Keys To  
Real*

**REVIVAL**



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Every several years it seems there is a report of a revival or movement of God happening somewhere. Such is the case as I am delivering this message, where a number of Christian college campuses have reported a spiritual breakout—which is probably a more appropriate term in most cases of such happenings than revival is. When such events happen, naturally it will spark discussions about what true revival or a genuine move of The Spirit is. These conversations are not intended to judge, question, criticize, or condemn whatever current events initiated them. Rather, they are intended to keep people focused and not allow emotional hype common to such events lead people away from the core elements of biblical truth.

Sadly, when left unchecked, often a spiritual outbreak can become spiritually dangerous. So it is important to address these matters *before* problems develop. Unfortunately, there are many who see this as an attack on the current outbreak itself who will begin efforts of backlash against truth saying such things as, “Satan would not do this,” or, “There are masses of people worshipping God, what’s wrong with that?” I will address the former later in this teaching, but as for the latter there is nothing wrong with people worshipping God, so long as they are truly worshipping The God of The Bible in spirit and in truth. And if that is not what they are doing, then there is a lot wrong with it.

As a result of this I issued a few simple statements about the concept of revival and how we should be able to biblically determine where The Holy Spirit is present. Think about it for a moment. The Prophet Ezekiel seems very clear in stating that through the new covenant people will be filled with The Spirit and then *CAUSED* to walk in God’s Law, which of course is The Torah (see Ezekiel 36:27).

You know, if we truly believed that this is what The *HOLY* Spirit does, which would be more properly rendered *Spirit Of Holiness*, then a lot of the discussions I hear and read

about during times of spiritual breakouts wouldn't be happening. But before getting into some of that I want to go through some foundational aspects of the "Christian" concept of "revival".

Recently, in response to this most current spiritual breakout, Dr. Craig Keener posted a brief article titled *Opinion: What is Revival—and is it Happening at Asbury?* about what revival is, at least in his opinion of course. Now, the article makes a number of observations that I think the majority would gravitate toward, but there were two points that caught my attention—points I think most people might miss.

First, Dr. Keener notes that the term revival is *extrabiblical*.<sup>1</sup> This is an interesting choice of word because he did not say *unbiblical*, a word often used by issues felt to be *against Scripture*. While technically both terms can be used interchangeably, *extrabiblical* tends to be used of things not found in The Bible but also do not seem to oppose The Bible. And if there is such a thing as genuine Holy Spirit led revival, than it certainly would not be opposed to Scripture.

The next point that caught my attention was where Dr. Keener stated: "...a lot goes on in the name of Christianity that isn't very Christian. The same is true in the history of revivals. God is God, but people are still people. One generation's unique behavior during some revival can become the next generation's tradition—and the following generation's legalism. Some claims of revival are attempts to stir up emotion or create hype. And those who want a name for themselves often hijack movements that God initiates among the lowly."<sup>2</sup> You know, I have already seen larger and more influential ministries saying things like "We're looking for a church that can fit 'X' amount of people to host revival." Wait a sec... *Host* revival?

## Revival In History

We have to be realistic and, without speaking directly against anything currently in motion that could be the work of The Holy Spirit, use discernment, exercise caution, and issue warnings against any points of concern that may arise in any spiritual breakout. I have studied the history of "Christianity" and my major in college was evangelism and revival. Some of my classes, outside of the general Bible stuff that is required for everyone, included: *History Of Revivalists*, *Spiritual Warfare*, *Evangelism Among Contemporary Religions In America*, *Evangelism Among Major World Religions*, *Methods Of Evangelism*, and *Media Age Evangelism*. While others were writing term papers on other topics, some of my term papers were focused on past movements and key figures in these movements. I don't say this to boast, but simply to note that I am qualified to speak on this topic.



My heart has always been, more than anything else, toward a genuine awakening through The Spirit toward embracing the whole Bible message of Torah and Yeshua together, just as described in Revelation 14:12. I have always believed that if God said to do or not do something in The Bible that's what we should follow. This is why in my earliest years in this walk when people showed me things like the food laws or The Sabbath Day it was not even a question for me to follow these things, despite the fact that most "Christians" continue, against the whole of Scripture, to believe these things abolished and refuse to follow them.

Something that I can say with good confidence has marked all past movements, whether they are called revivals, awakenings, spiritual breakouts, or anything else, is that they had an emphasis on returning to obedience to Scripture. Read the works of Charles Finney—Lectures On Revival is a good start. Read the message *Sinners In The Hands Of An Angry God* by Jonathan Edwards. Read the books Why Revival Tarries and Sodom Had No Bible by Leonard Ravenhill. While I would not agree with all of their theology, these were no nonsense messages that invoked a genuine fear of God and a hunger for obedience.

Let me turn back to that point about the term revival being *extrabiblical*. According to the Oxford English Dictionary the earliest reference to this idea of revival is attributed to a Puritan by the name of Cotton Mather in 1702. So this idea or concept of "revival" is relatively new in the overall history of biblical faith practice.

However, this doesn't yet mean that the concept is *unbiblical*, again using this term to denote that which is against Scripture in contrast with *extrabiblical* in reference to that which is not in The Bible but not necessarily against it. Again, if there is a case to be made that there can be a legitimate concept of revival than we cannot deem it fully *unbiblical*. We can, however, determine that there are *unbiblical counterfeit revivals*.

Some would contend that if there is a case to be made that there is a biblical basis for revival, it would be exclusive to what is commonly called the "Old Testament". In an article titled *The Old Testament Concept Of Revival Within The New Testament* published in KAIROS: Evangelical Journal Of Theology, Vol. VIII. No. 1 the author, Ervin Budiselić, states that, "Three issues characterize the Old Testament concept of revival: a) revival must be viewed in the context of the covenant which the Lord established with Israel at Sinai; b) revival means a revival of Israel; c) the saving dimension of revival often involves earthly and material blessings."<sup>3</sup> In another article titled *Revival And Revivalism: A Historical And Doctrinal Evaluation*, published in the Detroit Baptist Seminary Journal the author, Gerald Priest, says, "In the Old Testament, 'revival' is a form of covenant rededication, and necessarily includes restoration to divine favor,"<sup>4</sup> and then continues in saying, "Renewal comes through reform, that is, a return to covenant obedience to Yahweh."<sup>5</sup>

## Is There A Biblical Basis For Revival?

The only examples we have in Scripture that can even come remotely close to being called “revivals” would be the short-lived reforms under King Hezekiah and King Josiah, as well as possibly the events recorded in the books of Ezra and Nehemiah. However, in all of these examples there is a clear return to living by The Torah, which had been abandoned in the first two examples through the period of Israel’s idolatry and the latter a result of the Babylonian captivity. In the cases of Hezekiah and Josiah we see very clearly the smashing of idols and the return to The Torah. In the case of Nehemiah and Ezra we see a return from exile with a desire to restore Torah worship of Yah, though there are indications that they didn’t get everything right and these books may well be a documenting of the early formations of Pharisaism. This will be important to this study as we go on. I would ask, then, at this point: If we are not seeing the smashing of idols, at least in concept—meaning that while we may not have literal idol statues to smash today, we certainly have an abundance of idolatry within “Christianity” that needs to be abandoned—and a return to covenant obedience to The Torah, are we truly seeing revival?



Another important note that cannot be overlooked is that all examples within the biblical narrative that could be associated with the “Christian” concept of revival come from the portion of Scripture commonly called by “Christians” the “Old Testament”. But the overwhelming majority of “Christians”—especially those generally reporting revival or some kind of movement, awakening, or spiritual breakout—live under the theology that they are “not under the Old Testament”. So, can we really associate the “Christian” concept of revival with The Bible at all when the only examples even remotely close to it are from the portion of Scripture rejected as no longer applicable? I mean, when you say that we are not under the “Old Testament” as a means of rejecting the commandments, at least in part, then you have also rejected both the only *possibly* biblical basis for revival and the fact that biblical revival would be a return to keeping those very same *rejected* commandments.

If we are to accept the “Christian” concept of revival, it seems we must accept it on terms outside of the parameters of Scripture—as something *extrabiblical* at best and possibly as something *unbiblical*. I have heard, as already stated, some saying that “Satan won’t do that... he won’t lead masses of people to a worship service, he won’t heal people like we are seeing, he won’t cause hundreds of young people to gather in prayer.” But this is simply not a true statement.

Have you ever been to a secular rock or rap concert? It’s not something I recommend, but most people prior to coming to faith in Yeshua on any level have been to at least one. People who bought tickets to these shows months in advance will line up and

wait for hours for the doors to the stadium or concert hall to open up—and much of the time they are a lot friendlier than “*Christians*” attending some scheduled “revival service” somewhere, which can be more akin to what you see at some of these Black Friday sales. Now, if Satan can do that, if he can pack a stadium of people for a rock or rap concert, he can also lead people to line up in droves to sing so-called worship songs in an antinomian Christian church environment. I will remind you that Satan is the lawless one and antinomianism is a fancy theology word for lawlessness.

Then there is the matter of prayer. You know, there are a lot of world religions that hold a lot of prayer gatherings. Muslims, for example, pray several times a day, often gathered together in a crowd, all facing toward Mecca as is their custom—should we say they are in revival? If you look at pictures of Muslims in prayer and some of the pictures I have seen of prayer gatherings associated with “revival”, there is little difference in them. And while, again, this is not to make any judgments or criticisms but to simply use this as an illustration, how can we know that, in a primarily antinomian “*Christian*” gathering, they truly are praying to The God of The Bible, The God of Israel, that gave His Torah and intends for His followers to live by it? And even if they are, Proverbs 28:9 says that those who turn their ear from The Torah, even their prayer is an abomination.

It really makes me wonder just who it is that is listening, and answering, the prayers of the lawless masses of “*Christianity*”. If we are being honest and truly taking Scripture for what it says, the logical conclusion is that any “answered prayers” in any antinomian environment are the work of Satan for the purpose of keeping people bound to their *lawlessness*. Think about it, if Satan answers the prayers of the *Torah-rejecting* masses of “*Christian*” religion, they will believe God answered their prayers despite their *lawless religious practice* and despite passages like Proverbs 28:9, leading them to think they are in right-standing with God while simultaneously living in disobedience to His Torah.

Would not, then, the truly judgmental ones be those who have judged such a spiritual outbreak to be a genuine revival and then further judged those who raise legitimate questions and concerns as “speaking against the revival”?

In the current event, as has been the case with many such reports of revival, there are testimonies of healing. But there are so-called faith healers outside of “*Christianity*” too. There are gurus, shamans, witch doctors, and so on with confirmed and documented miracles that take place through their efforts. These things are obviously not happening by The Spirit of God. If Satan can create healing through these types of faith healers, then once again it stands to reason that he can do it in a predominantly antinomian “*Christian*” environment. And, again, it makes sense that Satan would do this more through antinomian “*Christianity*” than anywhere else, because it is here he can truly deceive people into believing they are right with God while they refuse to obey God’s commandments.

I hear about testimonies of deliverance in these “*Christian*” revivals as well. But these are the standard kind of things that always get lifted up as testimonies, such as deliverance from things regarded as sexual sins in Scripture, deliverance from drugs and alcohol, deliverance from witchcraft, or other such matters. These tend to fall into what I

often refer to as *cultural holiness*, which is whatever *popular religion* of the day deems to remain a part of their own code of holiness, whether it can be tied to Scripture or not, while dismissing things that are a part of genuine biblical holiness.

Yes, these things are typically linked with The Torah as well. There are certainly things within the commandments that address various sexual behaviors and would regard them as sin. Yes, there are absolutely biblical prohibitions against witchcraft practices. To some extent there are even biblical admonitions against at least the consumption of alcohol and so-called recreational drugs to the point of drunkenness or intoxication—where your mind is impaired. But while these things are absolutely part of embracing Torah-obedience, if they do not ultimately lead to a completely Torah-obedient lifestyle then they serve only to further solidify the deception of the lawless one.

## The Measuring Stick Of True Revival

Let me interject here, as well, that there is no such thing as a requirement on any one person to follow every one of the commandments. Most people accept the count of 613 commandments, typically attributed to Maimonides—a famous medieval period Rabbi. Regardless, if we look at the list, we find that there are many commandments that have a specific prerequisite. For example, about half of the commandments require you to be a Levite Priest before you are even allowed to do them. Others would require you to be a king over Israel, a court official, a farmer, a man, a woman, or a child. So even Yeshua, The Messiah, at the very least was not required to follow commandments that pertain only to women. I point this out because whenever you talk about obeying “all” of the commandments people get confused.



That said, there are commandments that clearly apply to all people at all points of history, and some of these are among those most rejected by “*Christians*” today. Some people wonder why certain ministries and Bible teachers, such as myself, place a lot of focus on a handful of commandments—primarily the Leviticus 11 food laws, the biblical Sabbath Day, the biblical Feast Days, and the relationship between several *unbiblical* holidays that are likely a violation of Deuteronomy 12:29-31, where we are told not to appropriate the ways of *pagan* religion or the religious practices of “the nations” and use them in worship of The Hebrew God. It is because of the mass rejection of these matters that they must come to the front of all discussions pertaining to biblical obedience.

In Acts 15 there are four things that are brought to the front of the discussion. Most of the time these are taken as being “the only things” that are to be imposed on converts to the faith from the Gentile nations. But this line of thinking is problematic in that there are

things *not on the list* that very few today would call an acceptable practice by “Christians”. For example, we see no prohibition in the four things listed in Acts 15 against lying or stealing, but very few “Christians” would go as far as saying these are acceptable for a follower of Yeshua simply because they are omitted from Acts 15. Also, proper study of the passage shows that these were the greatest religious strongholds of the day due to their high importance in the *pagan* religion that the converts were coming out of.

In like manner, today we are no longer simply calling people out of the world and out of *pagan* religions. In fact, at least in the United States, it is not often the case that we are dealing with people attached to other religions. American evangelism deals more with generally secular people than those committed to a particular world religion or even a cult religion. But if we truly want to lead people to the whole truth of Scripture, we also must focus on the greatest strongholds over “Christianity” as well, and these seem to be the false belief that the food laws, Sabbath, and Feast Days are not to be practiced by “Christians” while certain *secular-pagan holidays* are to be practiced by them.

In order to determine that a true revival, awakening, movement, or spiritual outbreak is taking place and is led by The Spirit of God then we have to be able to measure it against Scripture. Ezekiel 36:27 tells us that where The Spirit is involved the people will be caused to walk in God’s Law, The Torah. From cover to cover The Bible tells us to obey the commandments of God, all the way to the very end of Revelation where it says those who kept the commandments will be those given a right to partake of the Tree of Life.

Since testimonies of divine healing and deliverance from such things as sexual sins, drugs and alcohol, or witchcraft are the expectation of “Christians” today, this does not seem to be a good measuring stick to test a particular movement against. But if we saw people in a fully antinomian environment, a place where it is taught that certain commandments are voided, led by The Spirit of God, in large numbers consciously deciding to stop eating unclean things, determining that they will keep the biblical Sabbath and the biblical Feast Days, and renouncing the popular but completely *unbiblical* holidays then we might have a stronger case to say “Only God could do this”. Satan can and will lead people from anything between full blown antinomianism to partial nomianism, even to the point of keeping *most* of the applicable commandments. What Satan, *the lawless one*, cannot do is lead people to full pronomianism *because he is the lawless one*.

Satan is the deceiver and he will always give you everything you need to stay within the realm of what the apostle Paul called *the delusional force of lawlessness* (see 2 Thessalonians 2:8-11). If Satan can keep you deceived through a belief that we need to “unhitch from the Old Testament altogether”, then that is where he will lead you. This makes it easier for him to keep you deceived if you begin get an itch for “something more holy”. Then he can just lead you to a place with a little more *cultural holiness*, but certainly not a place that is all in with the whole counsel of Scripture. If he needs to take you to a place that has the appearance of “revival” but still rejects at least that handful of commandments “Christianity” has, for the most part, deemed obsolete in order to keep you deceived, that is exactly what he will do.



There are even a growing number of churches today that have turned to following the food laws, keeping The Sabbath, and celebrating the Feast Days but refuse to let go of certain popular holidays that come from Roman Catholicism with likely influences from other religions blended into them. Of course, I am talking about *Christmas*, *Easter*, and *Halloween*, as well as some of the Catholic feast days for their “Saints”. And it’s not just “Saint” Valentine’s Day and “Saint” Patrick’s Day. I am seeing more and more “Christians” talking about lesser known Catholic “Saints” and their appointed feast days as well. Not too long ago I saw a bunch of “Christians” talking about some “Saint” who, after being beheaded, allegedly walked around preaching while holding his severed head in his hands and more recently I saw someone share a photo where they were standing next to an idol statue of “Saint” Brigid and talking about her “feast day”. It’s as if nobody in “Christianity” has any discernment of spirits anymore.

## **Asbury University: An Example Of Revival?**

In the midst of the reported *spiritual outbreak* at the Asbury University and elsewhere someone mentioned to me that they thought the students were Torah-positive, kept The Sabbath, and followed the food laws. I felt this seemed a little odd, as this is not a Messianic school or anything like that. So, I wanted to find out what the deal was. As such, I found an online discussion group and proceeded to ask a couple of simple questions:



The first question I asked was: I have been told that the students in this revival keep the biblical Sabbath Day (which would coincide with sunset Friday to sunset Saturday on modern calendars) and that they follow The Torah (which would include things like keeping the Leviticus 11 food laws and celebrating the biblical Feast Days). Is this true?

The second question was: If the response to the first question is not true, is there any indication that this revival is leading people to follow these aspects of Scripture outlined in The Torah? Has there been any leading of the students to pursue these areas of Torah-keeping within their faith practice?

These are the replies I received from those implying they were an active part of this event:

“Asbury University closely aligns with Wesleyan Holiness doctrine. We don't follow the ceremonial or civil laws set for the Jewish people during the OT.”

“The fruits of revival don't include following the dietary and ceremonial laws given to the Israelites, they do include spiritual healings, conviction of sin, peace, true worship, zeal to share with others, repentance, increase in faith, commitments to Christ, etc.

If you are judging revivals based on their adherence to customs not normatively a part of the Christian's conviction since it was dealt with in part in the Jerusalem counsel in Acts, and more fully later in Corinthians, then you will be disappointed in this revival.

If you are looking for genuine repentance, that transforms our nature to become more like Christ infecting our heart for the love of God and neighbor through the obedience of the word and the testimony of our mouth, this is the revival for you!”

“If you go back under the law of Moses make sure you are keeping all 613 commandments don't pick and choose”

“In answer to your questions. No and no. I grew up in Wilmore, home of Asbury, attended Asbury and worked at Asbury as did both my parents, grandparents, brother and extended family. I can confidently say this.”

“I recommend Acts 15. That should get you up to speed with what the rules of the game are for Gentiles.”

And then this one, which I particularly enjoyed:

“Maybe go for yourself and see how the Spirit of God is moving. It's not only Asbury revival has broken out. It's happening in multiple places. You should be shouting that God is moving on our youth and people are being healed, delivered and filled with the Holy Spirit. If you want more than that then maybe you need to pray about why your questioning this moving of GOD!!!”

Clearly these are not the kind of replies that would come from a Torah-positive group or a group where, as we have noted in this study already from Ezekiel 36:27, God's Spirit of Holiness is *CAUSING* people to walk in His Law. I would also note that I received no response from anyone claiming to be a part of the event at the Asbury University that was in any way positive toward living by The Torah or even expressing an interest, such as asking a question with an inquiring and curious tone about these portions of Scripture.

Now, again, I must continue to emphasize that this teaching is not about a particular group or a specific *spiritual breakout*. I am merely referring to this event because it is current, so people will have it fresh in their mind, and it is relevant to the study, in that I inquired of people who were there and received some idea from at least those who responded regarding their views about God's commandments during what was reported to be an outpouring of The Spirit.

## Statements From Past Revivalists

As previously mentioned, there are a number of great works by revivalists of a generation past that are worth looking at. While, again, I may not, as a Torah-positive follower of the biblical Yeshua, agree with the totality of the theology of these preachers, their words—especially when read from a pronomian perspective—provide the fuel that sparked the revivals they led. If we are to establish anything that could be genuine revival, after having looked at the only possible biblical basis for revival, primarily through the reforms under King Hezekiah and King Josiah, it is essential to look at these important messages.



As I have previously stated, one of the most famous revival sermons in history is from what is called The First Great Awakening; titled *Sinners In The Hands Of An Angry God* by Jonathan Edwards. Allow me to read but a brief excerpt from this message.

The God that holds you over the pit of hell, much as one holds a spider, or some loathsome insect over the fire, abhors you, and is dreadfully provoked: his wrath towards you burns like fire; he looks upon you as worthy of nothing else, but to be cast into the fire; he is of purer eyes than to bear to have you in his sight; you are ten thousand times more abominable in his eyes, than the most hateful venomous serpent is in ours. You have offended him infinitely more than ever a stubborn rebel did his prince; and yet it is nothing but his hand that holds you from falling into the fire every moment. It is to be ascribed to nothing else, that you did not go to hell the last night; that you was suffered to awake again in this world, after you closed your eyes to sleep. And there is no other reason to be given, why you have not dropped into hell since you arose in the morning, but that God's hand has held you up. There is no other reason to be given why you have not gone to hell, since you have sat here in the house of God, provoking his pure eyes by your sinful wicked manner of attending his solemn worship. Yea, there is nothing else that is to be given as a reason why you do not this very moment drop down into hell.

O sinner! Consider the fearful danger you are in: it is a great furnace of wrath, a wide and bottomless pit, full of the fire of wrath, that you are held over in the hand of that God, whose wrath is provoked and incensed as much against you, as against many of the damned in hell. You hang by a slender thread, with the flames of divine wrath flashing about it, and ready every moment to singe it, and burn it asunder; and you have no interest in any Mediator, and nothing to lay hold of to save yourself, nothing to keep off the flames of

wrath, nothing of your own, nothing that you ever have done, nothing that you can do, to induce God to spare you one moment.<sup>6</sup>

Could you imagine the reaction that such words would garner if they were delivered in a modern-day “revival”—especially one scheduled in advance by a progressive hyper-grace church? Yet these are the very kind of words that sparked revival in the past. Consider also these words from Charles Finney, the most notable figure of The Second Great Awakening, out of his famous Lectures On Revival:

A "revival of true Christianity" presupposes a falling away. Almost all true Christianity in the world has been produced by revivals, because God has found it necessary to use humanity's excitability to produce powerful awakenings among them before He can lead them to obey. People are spiritually sluggish. So many things lead their minds away from God and oppose the influence of the Gospel that God must arouse excitement in them until the wave rises so high that it sweeps away all obstacles. Before they will obey God, people must be thoroughly awakened. Only then will they overcome counteracting forces.

Not that excited feeling is spirituality. It is not. But it is excited worldly desires, appetites, and feelings that prevent true Christianity- the human will is, in a sense, enslaved by fleshly and worldly desires. It is therefore necessary for God to awaken people to a sense of guilt and danger, and thus produce an opposite excitement of feeling and desire. This counter-feeling breaks the power of worldly desire and leaves the will free to obey God.<sup>7</sup>

While the previous segment from Edwards focused on the impending wrath toward the sinner, Finney here places on emphasis on *obedience*. As noted when I shared about the reforms of Hezekiah and Josiah, any true Bible-based revival must include a return to full covenant obedience to The Torah. Finney also addresses worldliness. 1 John 2:15 says, “Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him.”

Then there is Leonard Ravenhill's highly regarded book Why Revival Tarries, heralded by many as one of the greatest works on the topic of revival ever written. Here we find one of my personal favorite quotes, where the preacher uttered these words:

One of these days some simple soul will pick up the book of God, read it, *and believe it*. Then the rest of us will be embarrassed. We have adopted the convenient theory that the Bible is a Book to be explained, whereas first and foremost it is a Book to be believed (and after that to be obeyed).<sup>8</sup>

You know, that really does sum up the matter quite nicely, actually. I have dealt with a lot of people who come across as being well studied and appear to be intelligent, but often times the dumbest things I have ever heard come from the most educated people. In contrast, those who simply have a heart for God and His ways with a desire to follow

Yeshua and The Bible are typically the most receptive to the basic truths of Scripture, including, when shown, aspects of The Torah that the majority of “*Christians*” have been conditioned to believe no longer matter. As Ravenhill notes, it’s that simple person who just reads, believes, and obeys The Bible that will completely wreck popular religion.

While these great historical works, and many others, from revivalist preachers offer a lot to think about in regard to what revival was in the past and what it really should be, there is another particularly new work that I want to turn to. I think this book is every bit on the same level as these great works of past revivalists. This is the book Letters To The Church by Francis Chan.

I was so impressed by this book that for a time I bought copies of it and gave them to people, because there are so many profound statements in it that really do have that same revivalist tone. Consider these words from the author:

The more I study the Gospels, the more I am convinced that those of us who live in the United States have a warped view of what it means to be a “*Christian*.” It is for that reason our churches are in the state they are in. a warped view of Christianity can only result in a warped church. But what if we started over? What if we bulldozed what we currently call “church” and started over with actual Christians?<sup>9</sup>

## What Is A Christian?

The word “*Christian*” does not mean the same thing today that it meant in the first century. The key to seeing this is in the suffix “*ian*”. In the Greek language the word was *Cristianos*, with the suffix “*ianos*” in Greek denoting someone as a slave to that which it was attached. So the word was acknowledging those who lived in a manner that was *enslaved* to Messiah, which in Greek would be *Cristos*. This obviously fits with the introduction given by the apostles where they often announced themselves as *a slave to Messiah Yeshua*.

In our modern English-speaking culture, however, the parallel suffix “*ian*” is loosely used to associate someone or something with the word to which it is attached. In modern “*Christian*” religion you are generally regarded as a “*Christian*” so long as you claim to believe “Jesus is the Christ”. There is no real demand on a person’s faith.

But what if, as Chan suggests, we were able to wipe the slate clean, wreck the entire system of “*Churchianity*”, and start fresh with people who, as Ravenhill said, pick up The Bible, read it, believe it, *and obey it*? Imagine what would happen if people decided they



were fed up with popular religion, fed up with the totally unbiblical ways of modern-day Americanized “Christianity”, tired of the hype of the *megachurches*, tired of the scams of so-called “Christian” television and the con artists running them, tired of it all and determined to return to The Bible alone as the foundation of our faith?

1 Timothy 4:13 says to devote yourselves to the public reading of Scripture. This was a standard practice of the faith in the first century. In the Synagogues on The Sabbath Day the people gathered to hear the public reading of The Torah and The Prophets, and this is exactly what Paul would have been referring to in this passage. They did not have “church services”, there was no such thing as “Christian” churches at this time in history. They met three places: The Temple during the Feast Days and other significant times, the Synagogues every biblical Sabbath Day (which, again, is sunset Friday to sunset Saturday), and daily from house to house. Those were the places they met, there was no such thing as a “Christian” church that held “services” on “Sundays”. In fact, apart from the vague statements about meeting daily, “Sunday” is never once highlighted as a specific day of meeting in the entire Bible. Think about that a moment and just ask yourself: *How biblical is “Christianity” today, really, when so little of its standard practice matches with Scripture?*

You know, if you study the etymology of the word “church” there is proposed a possible influence of a particular Welsh word that means: *citadel, fortress, stronghold*. 2 Corinthians 10:4 says: “For the weapons of our warfare are not fleshly but powerful through God for the tearing down of strongholds.” Now, I am not proposing we stretch one *possible* etymological influence of the word “church” into a wild conspiracy or anything like that. But isn’t it interesting that we have statements like that of Chan, suggesting what could happen if we *tear down the stronghold of counterfeit “Christianity”* and seek to rebuild with something that actually *is* biblical.

Whether we call it revival or anything else, if it’s the real thing it will lead us back to covenant obedience to The Torah. Ezekiel 36:27 and Revelation 14:12 must be foundational to any genuine movement where we are, through covenant faith, *CAUSED* to walk in The Torah and become those holy ones who follow *both* the commandments of God and the faith of Yeshua.

In The Bible Satan is called the lawless one. Lawlessness and sin are defined in 1 John 3:4 as breaking, transgressing, violating The Torah. We first encounter him in Genesis 3 where he leads people into believing that they do not need to obey the commandments of God. Incidentally, that first broken commandment resulting in eating something God said not to eat, and today the masses of “Christianity” believe that they are free to eat things that God said not to eat. The language indicates that this event took place on a Sabbath Day with Adam and Eve in the midst of the garden, the place they were assigned to work, so even before they ate that forbidden fruit they were already pushing the limits of God’s Law at the very least. Scripture doesn’t say they were working in the garden, but why would they even be *in the midst* of their place of work on The Sabbath? They shouldn’t have been there in the first place.

In like manner, The Bible tells us that Yeshua is the Righteous One. Deuteronomy

6:25 tells us that it will be counted as righteousness when we do what is commanded, by God, in The Torah. The first direct message of Yeshua in The Gospel is a call to repent—which means to turn from sin. Matthew 1:21 says that the reason His name is Yeshua is because He came to save His people from their sin, and again sin is breaking The Torah. So the whole reason Yeshua came was to lead people into a Torah-obedient way of living.

Titus 2:11-12 says, “For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all men, training us to deny ungodliness and worldly desires and to live in a manner that is self-controlled and righteous and godly in the present age.” If you look deeper into this verse, ungodliness and worldly desires are words related to sin, which we have seen means breaking The Torah, and 1 John also, as already noted, says we are not to love the world or the things of the world. Then we have righteousness mentioned, which we have just looked at to find that it refers to a Torah-keeping lifestyle.

Grace is a big topic in popular “*Christian*” religion, but most people believe that grace is given to “free us from the law”. Here, however, we have the exact opposite being stated, where grace is what frees us from *breaking The Torah* and then leads us into a Torah-obedient way of life. That’s how Paul defines grace here in this passage from Titus chapter 2. It really makes you wonder just how much of The Bible “*Christianity*” gets wrong, doesn’t it?

If grace, as we see in Titus 2:11-12, is what trains us or leads us to stop breaking The Torah and then leads us and trains us to start living by The Torah and passages like Ezekiel 36:27 and Revelation 14:12 are true, then it stands to reason that any outpouring of The Spirit and of grace must result in an atmosphere where people desire to follow the commandments of God. You simply cannot have it any other way.

When we read about a lawless one and a Righteous One in Scripture and we come to grips with the fact that one leads us in a practice of lawlessness, which is antinomianism and Torah-breaking, and the other leads us in a life of righteousness, which is pronomianism and Torah-keeping, then it becomes easy to see who follows Yeshua and who follows Satan. While many “*Christians*” don’t want to hear it and in general cannot comprehend it, the evidence from The Bible seems quite clear that Satan is their god and they exist to serve his kingdom, despite their sincere belief that they serve the Kingdom of Yah.

When it comes to grace, it seems we have a perfect example to how grace must harmonize with obedience to the commandment of God through the record of Noah. The Bible says that he found grace, or favor as some translations render it, with God. Then he was given a set of instructions to build an ark. You see, grace alone is not what saved Noah. Grace was where God gave Noah the instructions that would save him. According to the pattern of grace seen in Titus 2:11-12, Noah had to make a decision that he was not going to reject the instructions, but rather to do them, and *then* he would find salvation for himself and his family.

Those who believe that grace “frees them from The Torah” tend to miss this important point. I once even heard a very misguided preacher say that before the cross there was no grace. You can’t read through the “Old Testament” without encountering the grace of God over and over again, but you also cannot read through the “New Testament” without encountering the call to Torah-obedience over and over again. No matter where you turn in Scripture the concepts of grace and Torah work in tandem with each other, and grace is always present to equip you for Torah-based living.

## **People ARE Coming To Yeshua’s Torah Lifestyle**

There have been many events throughout history that are regarded as awakenings, movements, or revivals. Of course there were the events labeled the First Great Awakening and the Second Great Awakening. There was the Welsh revival and the Moravian revival. But in modern times the bulk of what is generally linked to revivals or movements tend to be connected with what has primarily been labeled *Pentecostal Christianity* or *Pentecostalism*. So I now want to turn the focus to this movement, which as a whole has been a perpetual movement for over a hundred years now.



The early Pentecostal Movement was marked primarily by what many have come to call *the nine gifts of The Spirit*. The idea for these gifts comes from 1 Corinthians 12:8-10 and are considered to be: word of wisdom, word of knowledge, faith, gifts of healings, workings of miracles, prophecy discerning, of spirits, speaking in tongues, and interpretation of tongues. Now, my purpose here is not to dive into a theological study of the *Pentecostal Christian* view on this topic—some of which is good and some not so good—but to simply note that this is the primary marker of the original movement. Some of the primary figures known in this segment of *Pentecostalism* were Charles Parham, considered the “father” of *Pentecostalism*, William Seymoure, the primary preacher of the Azusa Street revival, Smith Wigglesworth, John G. Lake, and Maria Woodworth-Etter.

The next major wave of *Pentecostalism* is considered to be what is often labeled the *Charismatic Renewal* as well as the *Healing Revivals*. In this movement there are two distinct markers that church historians would note. First is that what the early *Pentecostals* experienced began to spill over into the mainstream denominations and those outside of *Pentecostalism* began to embrace the beliefs that previously were mostly exclusive to the *Pentecostals*. The second aspect of this, particular to the *Healing Revivals* was that large tent crusades began to occur all over the United States with reports of mass amounts of divine healing. Some of the key figures in this portion of the movement were T.L Osbourne, Aimee Semple McPherson, Jack Coe, A.A. Allen, Oral Roberts, and William Branham.



The third and certainly most controversial major movement to come through *Pentecostalism* is the Word of Faith Movement. This movement is marked by a heavy emphasis on “*Christian*” concepts of prophecy and the idea of speaking things into existence. While there is a biblical basis for these concepts, there also seems to be clear abuses that developed during this movement. Such abuses gave rise to heresies like *prosperity gospel* beliefs, which are often used to exploit money from people. This was further exemplified by actions such as one large religious television network that I had witnessed establishing a program for the elderly to leave their entire inheritance to the television station, you know, instead of to their family. However, despite these actions, we must acknowledge that not everything in this portion of *Pentecostalism* was in error and that it brought a needed emphasis on the prophetic aspects of Scripture.

If we look at these three portions of *Pentecostalism*, despite the errors in theology present throughout many of the ministries that rose through them, we can turn back to the major segments of Scripture and begin to see a pattern form. The early focus of *Pentecostalism* aligns with the apostolic ministry with a renewed focus on the gifts of The Spirit. The *Charismatic Renewal* and *Healing Revivals* align with the Gospels. And the Word of Faith Movement with its focus on the prophetic aligns with the writings of the prophets.

This leaves us with one segment of Scripture left, working backwards: The Torah. Today there is a growing interest among churchgoers with the primary parts of The Torah that have long been rejected by mainstream “*Christianity*”. For the most part “*Christians*” have upheld the majority of the commandments that would apply to all people. This is why I don’t see it as too significant when a reported revival or spiritual outbreak is producing testimonies of deliverance from drugs and alcohol, sexually immoral practices, witchcraft, or other things that, for the most part, “*Christians*” always uphold as a standard of morality. So while people turning from these things should not be dismissed as *insignificant*, they also are not the primary indicators today of a truly sold-out faith practice.

In Acts 15 we find the apostles making a ruling on four things that warranted the most attention at the time. What were these four things? Were they deliverance from drugs and alcohol addiction? Were they a renouncing of witchcraft? No. They were to stop drinking blood, stop eating things offered to idols, stop eating meat from animals that were strangled, and stop engaging in cult prostitution. I know most Bibles have generalized that last one to “sexual immorality”, but deeper study of the text shows it was more specific to a pagan temple practice. Could you imagine if some random “Bible teacher” stood up in that day and asked, “Now, James, Paul, guys, there are people being delivered from drugs and alcohol, what are you guys doing focusing on these petty things?” Or, perhaps, “There are people everywhere receiving Yeshua as Messiah and you guys are mad that they haven’t stopped drinking blood and eating meat from animals that were strangled?” Yet this is exactly how some people are acting today regarding those who *test all things against Scripture*.

Let me tell you, if you are basing your ideas of what is “of God” or “of The Spirit” by anything other than The Bible than you have opened yourself up to deception. I get so tired

of people always compromising and always making excuses and always making stuff up to claim that God is moving on people that remain in the confines of lawless “Christianity”.

## **Blasphemy Of The Spirit?**

If, as Scripture says, The Spirit *CAUSES* true covenant Believers to walk in The Torah, then it should be impossible for a so-called revival to come and go and the people remain antinomian in their beliefs. This should really raise questions about whether certain heightened spiritual experiences are moves of The Spirit of God. I have been hearing people make accusations going so far as to say that if you dare to raise questions about a particular reported “revival” than you are “blaspheming The Spirit”. Suddenly, if you have the audacity to look at The Bible and say, “things aren’t lining up here,” you are the bad guy. There is a reason we have a Bible, and a big part of that reason is to ensure we are not led away into deception.



I have heard people say things like, “What if God did this to test us or expose those who have a religious spirit?” Well, if God can issue a test, He can also test to see who is paying attention to the whole counsel of Scripture and using The Bible to test all things against, including a reported “revival”. There are two sides to every coin. So if you want to propose God is testing people, He could be testing to see who is sensitive to the moving of The Spirit, OR He could be testing to see who is paying attention to The Bible, and those who familiarize themselves with the whole counsel of Scripture will be much better prepared to discern what is The Spirit of God and what is *another spirit*.

And let me note, as a lot of the criticism I have encountered against those who, like the Bereans, are determined to test all things against the whole counsel of Scripture are connected with Messianic, Hebrew Roots Movement, Pronomian Christian, or otherwise Torah-positive groups, some of the people who are making the accusation that it is *blaspheming The Spirit* to raise questions or concerns because things don’t line up—these same people have historically criticized the larger Pentecostal-Charismatic ministries who hold large miracle crusades. I am, of course, talking about people like those in the tent revivals like A.A. Allen, Jack Coe, Oral Roberts, and others, as well as Kathryn Kuhlman, Benny Hinn, Morris Cerullo, and numerous others. Now look, I am not endorsing any of these ministries, but I surely will not criticize or speak against them because just like a particular reported revival *we simply do not know if The Spirit of God truly was involved with these ministries*.

Don’t talk to me about blaspheming The Spirit if you have deemed Bible-based faith-healing ministries to be against God. If you want to talk about their theology, we can do that. But when there is even a fraction of a chance that something is the work of The Spirit

we should never speak directly against *that* aspect of the ministry. Question what doesn't align with Scripture, but don't speak directly against The Spirit.

However, if there is a fraction of a chance that something is legitimately the work of the devil we must equally consider that. Satan is a deceiver and an imitator. He can and will create the illusion of "revival" or "miracles, signs, and wonders" for the sole purpose of leading people deeper into deception. And it is for this reason we must always test everything against the Word of God. While we must be cautious to not attribute the work of The Spirit to Satan, we must also not attribute the work of Satan to The Spirit. And since both The Spirit and Satan are capable of producing signs and wonders, we might be wise to default to the fact that Satan leads people into deception and antinomian beliefs while The Spirit CAUSES people to walk in The Torah. There has to be balance and plain common sense.

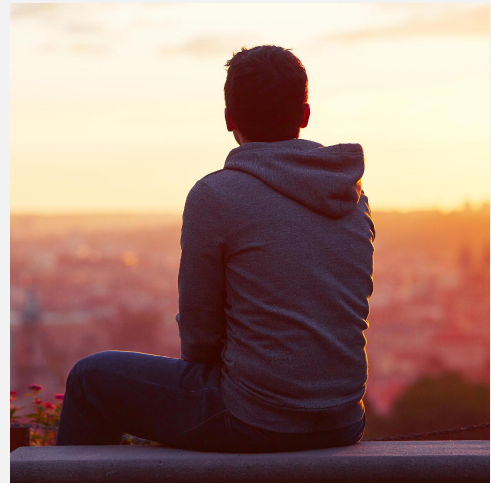
Satan will never tell you the whole story. He tells you what sounds good in the moment. This is what he did in Eden, in the garden while slithering through the branches of that tree in the midst. It's what he did with Yeshua in the wilderness. And it's what he does today when people insist that something is a "move of The Spirit" without considering the alternative that it *could be* another part of Satan's mission to lead people deeper into the delusion of lawlessness.

If the only things you are seeing during a reported revival, awakening, movement, or spiritual outbreak are signs and wonders or repentance of things that cultural holiness still considers sin while everyone still believes that other things God commanded don't need to be obeyed we must seriously question whether this is the work of The Spirit of God or the devil. Because if we really, truly, and undeniably believe the whole counsel of Scripture then we must believe that The Spirit of God will lead people to follow the whole counsel of Scripture. I believe with everything in me that if a real revival were taking place there would be at the very least one key person with authority and influence on that body of people who will be led to declare *under the unction of The Spirit* that The Torah is to be followed. Regardless of whether it happened through a seemingly natural message or someone being taken over by an outside force—for lack of a better term, appearing momentarily "possessed" by The Spirit of God—and The Spirit is undeniably speaking through that person in that manner, if The Spirit of God is doing the work, then to stay true to Scripture there must be a leading to The Torah.

It is true that when one sinner repents all of heaven rejoices, but we must be careful not to use such things as a means of accepting what is not truly of God. It is equally true that, per the words of our Messiah in Matthew 7:21-23, a group of people described as working a great number of phenomenon like casting out devils, prophesying, and working miracles—saying they did these things in the name of Yeshua—will be turned away by Him because of *lawlessness*, they didn't live by The Torah. We should really think about this before we use such signs and wonders as markers of revival.

## Knowing Who You Are In Messiah

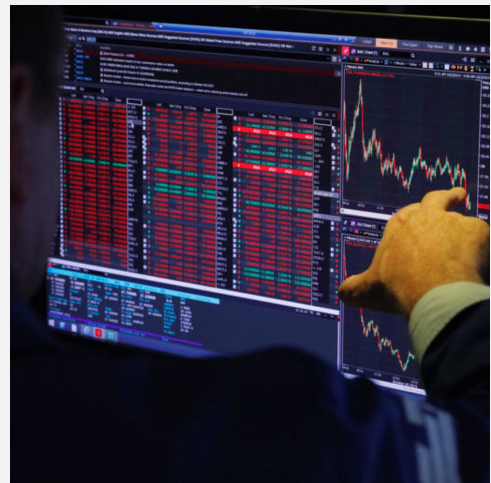
A lot of people have a hard time letting go of a lie and embracing the truth. Take, for example, a person who has been told their whole life by everyone in their family that they come from one ethnic group only to find out through tracing their family tree or having DNA testing that they are from a completely different cultural background. I can relate to this, actually, as my family had always believed part of our heritage comes from Ireland, but then a family member decided to research it as a hobby and now believes that branch of our family tree comes from England. Though these two cultures are close to each other, geographically, they are a bit different as well. To this day I have a stronger liking for Irish culture, most likely because that is the one that all my life I was told is part of where I come from.



This is a lot like how “*Christians*” are when they are presented with the truth that The Bible never once goes against The Torah. It all makes sense, the evidence is there, and the facts are undeniable. Yet because the lies have become so important they don’t want to let go of them. The concepts of “*Christianity*” remain the appeal to those who have known these ways all of their life, and it can be hard to fully make that switch. The problem is that, unlike my wanting to maybe hold only my seeming affinity for Ireland or Irish culture despite now knowing I may not come from there, “*Christians*” are playing around with things that may impact their eternal destination.

## The Truth Is Not Marketable

As I bring this message toward a close I want to share some final thoughts. Reports say that 50,000 people made their way to the February 2023 spiritual breakout at the Asbury University over the course of two weeks. That sounds like a lot of people from a certain perspective. But there are a lot of *megachurches* around the world that are in excess of that number every week at their regular service times and there are a reported 2.4 billion “*Christians*” worldwide. Suddenly, when we add in factors like that, 50,000 does not sound like a lot of people.



The plain fact is that the concept of “revival” is popular and attractive to people because it is marketable. The moment there is a report of a “revival” within “*Christianity*” it gets the attention of people who seek emotional hype in their religious experience.

Plain Bible truth is not so marketable. Getting people to simply fall in love with and follow the whole counsel of Scripture doesn't sell very well to the masses. As the saying goes: *There's no money in that.*

What shocks me more than anything based on recent reports of revival or whatever people want to call it is not that there were thousands of people led to a college campus or that a large number of youth had a deeper spiritual experience. I have seen this happen many times and I have studied about many other such events that occurred throughout the course of "Christian" church history. What I truly found perplexing is the number of professing Torah-positive people, including those leading ministries, who created division within the Torah movement for the sake of being in unity or finding common ground with antinomians.

It seems that a lot of people in the growing but clearly fractured Torah-positive movement still have much of mainstream "Christianity" in their heart the same way the ancient Israelites, having just been freed from Egyptian bondage, kept Egypt in their heart. It did not take long for the Israelites to start complaining about the cucumbers, melons, leeks, onions, and garlic they no longer had. Through all of this I've seen Torah-teaching people asking when intense spiritual breakouts have happened in a Messianic or Hebrew Roots community. They are in the wilderness, looking back at the Egypt that is American "Christianity" and murmuring, wishing for the very thing they, often having felt lied to, walked away from because they recognized it is a religion of lawlessness.

I am certainly not suggesting that we should be like that hypothetical "Pharisee" who boasted in prayer about how he is better than the sinner praying next to him. But if we truly want people to receive the full pronomian view then we cannot afford to be against the Bereans of our movement while joining hands with the deceived.

I am growing very concerned about the things I am seeing people say under the guise of "defending revival". The Bible says that there will be a separation of the sheep from the goats, much like a separation of the wheat from the tares. Yeshua referred to this in Matthew 25:31-33. But I am now seeing teaching that says sheep are to separate from sheep, referencing Ezekiel 34:17, with an indication that Torah-positive Believers should separate from other Torah-positive Believers over their position on what "revival" is. Let me dismantle this idea and show why this is simply not true.

Ezekiel 34:17 generally reads something like this, which is from the TLV: "As for you, My flock'—thus says *Adonai Elohim*—'behold, I will judge between sheep and sheep, between rams and male goats." The problem is this is not a good translation as the word "sheep" here is the Hebrew word "seh" (רֶשֶׁת) which can refer to sheep OR GOATS, as well as other livestock that are kept in flocks. This can be verified through Strong's Concordance (7716) where it renders "seh" as meaning: *a member of a flock, i.e. A sheep or goat -- (lesser, small) cattle, ewe, goat, lamb, sheep.* In fact, some translations of the passage say "cattle from cattle" instead of "sheep from sheep". Seeing as both the rest of the verse and Yeshua's reference call for sheep separated from goats (rams from adult male goats in the

latter of Ez. 34:17), a much better rendering for Ezekiel 34:17, as “seh” can be used of sheep or goats, would be: “...I will judge between sheep and goats, between rams and male goats.” In fact, there is one English translation, the CEB, that renders the passage as such and another, the MEV, that renders it “I will judge between sheep and cattle, between the rams and the male goats.” Also, the Orthodox Jewish Bible says: “I judge between seh and seh, between the rams and the goats,” suggesting that “seh and seh” clearly refers to “sheep and goats”.

Look, The Bible NEVER tells us to separate from like-minded Torah-keeping Believers. Quite the contrary. Psalm 133:1 says, “Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brothers to dwell together in unity!” These, by the way, are the exact words John Wesley used when he encountered the Moravian movement, that many have labeled a revival. But I have to say, I seriously question just how Torah-positive someone is if they are daring to propose separation among the remnant of the Torah-positive community for the sake of being in unity with antinomians.

Here’s something for you. The concept of revival, at least according to the modern “Christian” belief, is not really shown in Scripture, is based on large gatherings of people, and often defers to things like miracles, signs, wonders, healing, deliverance, and so on as the “proof” that revival is taking place. This is literally a mirror of what we read will be the way of *the many* in Matthew 7:21-23. In contrast, the concept of *remnant* is shown throughout Scripture, is always indicative of *the few* as described in Matthew 7:13-14 and elsewhere, and always defers to holiness through obedience to The Torah as the “proof” of being among this *remnant*.

The word “revival” is not found in The Bible. The closest thing is the word “revive” used primarily in a naturalistic sense—like reviving someone from impending death—which is found five times in Scripture. The word “remnant” is used over 80 times in The Bible and with frequency refers to those who are truly committed to living by the commandments of God, even if nobody else is. If the concept of “revival” can even be considered valid, it must be valid through the idea of *personal revival*. Are YOU personally revived toward full obedience to the ways of God through living according to His Torah? Because the plain reality is that no matter how many people are involved in a so-called “revival”, none of us know who *really* got saved or who *really* got delivered from something or anything else. We only ever will know our own personal commitment and our own personal revival experience.

You know, I remember when the evangelist Reinhardt Bonke held a crusade in Africa that attracted over nine million people. They reported over one million “decision cards” filled out—not *salvations*, but “decision cards”. At least they had enough sense to know that not all of those people were “saved”—and certainly not entering into true Torah-based covenant faith—so they reported them as “decision cards”. And where are those people today? I don’t know, and neither do you, but Bonke has passed away and since often those kind of events have some element of idolatry regarding the “celebrity preacher” I would say a lot of them have moved on now that their idol is dead. Look, I absolutely love the work men like Bonke or Billy Graham did and see inspiration in it. I have been to

gatherings where they spoke at and it is great to hear, in person, from people who had such influence. But I am also a realist and I know that this method is a numbers game, casting a broad net in hopes that maybe some will stick with it.

But if we are to see genuine revival it must be built on personal evangelism. I spend a lot of my time—time I really don't have a lot of to begin with—talking one-on-one with people trying to show them on a personal level the truth. I'd much rather spend time talking to someone alone where I can really pour into them on a personal level than to stand in a crowd and lead people to believe that if they parroted a prayer they are "as sure for heaven as if they are already there". Look, the bigger the crowd, in most cases, the greater the number of people who will end up deceived.

To close this out, I really can't find the "*Christian*" concept of revival anywhere in The Bible—the closest thing would be reforms that led to the smashing of idols and a return to living by The Torah under King Hezekiah and King Josiah. Perhaps that's because "*Christianity*" is not even truly in The Bible. Like it or not, the "*Christian*" religion was not formalized until the fourth century, hundreds of years after the time of Yeshua and the apostles, and Protestant "*Christianity*", which is what most non-Catholics today are, is only 500 years old. Pentecostalism, which is what gets most associated with the concept of revival, is only 100 years old. But I can find the idea of a remnant in Scripture. All through The Bible and all through history we see a faithful minority who are determined against all of the forces of popular religion to uphold the commandments of God. The masses may always be attracted to the hype of "revivals", but those who are true to the covenant, though they may be "the few", are the remnant. So, I would ask: *Do you want to be part of some passing revival, or do you want to be part of the remnant?*

Blessings and Shalom  
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