

The Need for Revivals

By Billy Sunday



What is a revival? Now listen to me. A revival does two things. First, it returns the Church from her backsliding, and second, it causes the conversion of men and women—and it always includes the conviction of sin on the part of the Church. What a spell the devil seems to cast over the Church today!

When is a revival needed? When the individuals are careless and unconcerned. If the Church were down on her face in prayer they would be more concerned with the fellow outside. The Church has degenerated into a third-rate amusement joint, with religion left out.

When is a revival needed? When carelessness and unconcern keep the people asleep. It is as much the duty of the Church to awaken and work and labor for the men and women of this city as it is the duty of the fire department to rush out when the call sounds. What would you think of the fire department if it slept while the town burned? You would condemn them, and I will condemn you if you sleep and let men and women go to hell. It is just as much your business to be awake. The Church of God is asleep today; it is turned into a dormitory; and has taken the devil's opiates.

When may a revival be expected? When the wickedness of the wicked grieves and distresses the Christian. Sometimes people don't seem to mind the sins of other people. Don't seem to

mind while boys and girls walk the streets of their city and know more of evil than gray-haired men. You are asleep.

When is a revival needed? When the Christians have lost the spirit of prayer.

When is a revival needed? When you feel the want of revival and feel the need of it. Men have had this feeling, ministers have had it until they thought they would die unless a revival would come to awaken their people, their students, their deacons and their Sunday-school workers, unless they would fall down on their faces and renounce the world and the works and deceits of the devil.

Expect Revival with Sacrifice

When may a revival be expected? When you are willing to make a sacrifice for the revival; when you are willing to sacrifice your feelings. Make a sacrifice of your business, of your time, of your money; you are willing to give to help to advance God's cause. When you give your influence and stand up and let people know you stand for Jesus Christ and it has your endorsement and time and money. Somebody has to be willing to make a sacrifice. They must be willing to get out and hustle and do things for God.

When may a revival be expected? When Christians confess their sins one to another. Sometimes they confess in a general way, but they have no earnestness; they get up and do it in eloquent language, but that doesn't do it. It is when they break down and cry and pour out their hearts to God in grief, when the floodgates open, then I want to tell you the devil will have cold feet.

Persecution Is a Godsend

There are a lot of people in church, doubtless, who have denied themselves—self-denial for comfort and convenience. There are a lot of people here who never make any sacrifices

for Jesus Christ. They will not suffer any reproaches for Jesus Christ. Paul says, [in effect], "I love to suffer reproaches for Christ" [2 Cor. 12:10]. [Jesus] says, "Woe unto you, when all men shall speak well of you!" (Luke 6:26, KJV). "Blessed are you when your enemies persecute you" [from Matt. 5, author paraphrase].

That is one trouble in the churches of God today. They are not willing to suffer reproach for God's sake. It would be a godsend if the Church would suffer persecution today; she hasn't suffered it for hundreds of years. She is growing rich and lagging behind.

Remember: God Is First

Make up your mind that God has given Himself up for you. I would like to see something come thundering along that I would have more interest in than I have in the cause of God Almighty! God has a right to the first place. God is first—remember that.

Multitudes of people are willing to do anything that doesn't require any self-denial on their part.

Seek you first God and everything else shall be added unto you. Christianity is addition; sin is subtraction. Christianity is peace, joy, salvation, heaven. Sin takes away peace, happiness, sobriety, and it takes away health. You are robbing God of the time that you misspend. You are robbing God when you spend time doing something that doesn't amount to anything, when you might do something for Christ.

"Oh, Lord, revive thy work!"

BILLY SUNDAY (1862–1935) was a professional baseball player who was converted to Christianity through the street preaching of Pacific Garden Mission's Harry Monroe. Sunday left a \$5,000-a-year salary in baseball for \$75 a month as an evangelist with the YMCA. He was known for his frenetic pulpit

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