

OUR NEED FOR TRUE REVIVAL

(Part 1: Nehemiah 8:1-6)

True revival is the urgent and pressing need of the church today. We need to cry out to God to revive us that we may experience the mighty power of the Spirit of God afresh. **True revival is the sovereign and supernatural work of God through His Word which causes us to experience a renewed sense of God's holy presence and mighty power in such a way that we are refreshed and empowered for a more vibrant walk with God.** As we reflect on Israel's historic experience of a genuine God-sent spiritual revival through the ministry of Ezra and Nehemiah, we will consider the biblical marks of true revival.

1. True revival is marked by _____.

Genuine God-sent revival is characterized by a renewed passion and enthusiasm for God's Word. This intense craving and hunger for God's Word was made manifest during the revival in ancient Jerusalem when the people of Judah were unified in their demand on Ezra to bring out the Book of the Law to be read and proclaimed to them (Nehemiah 8:1-3). God has graciously prepared the heart of His servant Ezra and the hearts of His people to experience a Spirit-led, convicting, authoritative and enthusiastic preaching and receiving of the Word of God (Ezra 7:9-10). Every season of God-sent revival is marked by the sovereign initiative of God in giving men and women passionate longing for God's Word. When God begins the work of revival in our hearts, we yearn and hunger for God's Word, and nothing else matters to us but delighting in the presence of God and feasting on the richness of His Word (Jeremiah 15:16; Psalm 19:7-8).

2. True revival is marked by _____.

When God revives His people, we are reawakened to the beauty, majesty and glory of who God is. Every God-produced revival is marked by the believers' response of reverent worship and humble adoration of the Lord. When true revival broke out in Israel, the people of God lifted up their hands and bowed their heads with their faces to the ground, demonstrating their reverence and submission to God (Nehemiah 8:4-6). Ezra blessed the Lord together with the people because they recaptured a glorious vision of God, who is ready to forgive, gracious and merciful, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love (Nehemiah 9:16-17). This reviving work of the Spirit of God produces in us a renewed heart of worship, a heart that burns with a tremendous sense of awe, amazement and gratitude to God for His great love, mercy and grace in Christ Jesus (Ephesians 2:4-5).
