



Network for Revival Prepare Issue 33 - December 2021

Advent motives for prayer for revival

As we celebrate Advent, we can think about three aspects which should motivate prayer for Revival:

Firstly, there is God's amazing grace in becoming incarnate. Just think of it. The holy, glorious, infinite, eternal, omnipotent, omnipresent, omniscient Creator and King of the universe became incarnate in the womb of Mary and in the baby Jesus. What love! It shows the depth of God's profound concern for people not to perish but to be saved through his incarnate Son. How he longs for all people to be saved. So we can rely on the fact that God really wants to answer our prayers for Revival.

Secondly, there is the wonderful prospect of the second Advent. We look forward to Jesus coming in glory. We should also seek to hasten his coming, as in the Maranatha Prayer "Come, Lord" (1 Cor 16:22). One way of doing this is to pray for Revival. This will bring many into the Kingdom and facilitate the return of Jesus because God is not willing that any should perish but is waiting for them to come to repentance (2 Peter 3:3-9).

Thirdly, there is the prospect of divine judgment and I want to expand on this solemn subject because it is soft-pedalled by many modern Christians and because it is part of my series on holiness which is crucial to praying and preparing for revival. We have looked at the motive of God's holiness, which should inspire godly fear and the motive of the majestic glory of God. This time we look at the motive of the judgment of God. It is a major motive both for holiness and for prayer for Revival.

Seeking holiness: motivated by the judgment of God

This is a rather solemn subject but we need to remember that God is with us in his infinite love, longing for us to respond to him in repentance, so he can bless us greatly.

We are all going to face divine judgment. This applies to unbelievers, and is therefore a powerful motive for praying and preparing for revival. But it applies to believers too, which is also a powerful motive for praying and preparing for revival in the church.

It is a wonderful truth that God chose us before the creation of the world. But God says something else about why he chose us: "he chose us in him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight" (Eph 1:4). God chose us to be holy. The question is - are we?

As Christians confident of eternal salvation by faith, we must remember that "we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each of us may receive what is due us for the things done while in the body, whether good or bad" (2 Cor 5:10) and we must give an account of ourselves (Rom 14:12).

We will stand before Jesus to admit that we have committed sins - even tolerated or justified sins - for which he died in deep physical, mental, emotional and spiritual agony.

Paul teaches that "we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each of us may receive what is due to us for the things done while in the body, whether good or bad" (2 Cor 5:10). James writes that we must be merciful in speech and action as we "are going to be judged by the law that gives freedom [the law of love] because judgment without mercy will be shown to anyone who has not been merciful" (Jas 2:8, 12-13).

Jesus teaches that we will be judged for selfish anger (Matt 5:22), judgmentalism (Matt 7:1-3; Lk 6:37 cf Rom 2:1-5), empty words (Matt 12:36-37). James writes that we must not grumble against one another or we will be judged because "The Judge is standing at the door!" (Jas 5:9). The NT treats verbal sins such as lies, perjury, gossip, or insults in the same category as sexual immorality and murder (1 Tim 1:9-10 cf Jas 3:5-6).

Also those of us involved in church leadership will be judged on how we do this - with the "gold and silver" of prayerful biblical teaching and lifestyle or the "wood, hay stubble" of human wisdom. Paul warns "their work will be shown for what it is, because the Day will bring it to light. It will be revealed with fire, and the fire will test the quality of each person's work. If what has been built survives, the builder will receive a reward. If it is

burned up, the builder will suffer loss but yet will be saved – even though only as one escaping through the flames” (1 Cor 3:13-15). James warns “Not many of you should become teachers, my fellow believers, because you know that we who teach will be judged more strictly” (Jas 3:1).

Jesus is particularly stern about judgment on failing churches in Revelation 2-3. If churches lose their first love, he will remove their lampstand [witness] (Rev 2:4-5). He will “fight against” those who get into false teaching or sexual immorality (Rev 2:14-16, 20-23). He will vomit “lukewarm” churches out of his mouth (Rev 3:16).

LUKEWARM ATTITUDES - HOW ARE WE DOING? ARE WE FALLING INTO THE FOLLOWING ATTITUDES?

- Tolerating sin
- Not apologising
- Not forgiving
- Not praying much
- Not seeking to grow and act in faith
- Not yearning for God
- Not seeking to "go on being filled with the Spirit" (Eph 5:18 literal. i.e. present, continuous tense)
- Not witnessing/evangelising
- Not correcting the impenitent, where appropriate
- Not teaching the difficult truths in the NT as well as the encouraging truths.
- Not strongly committed to corporate prayer
- Seeking popularity
- Welcoming and entertaining people rather than challenging them to commitment

The fact is that such lukewarm attitudes are fairly common in today’s church. And, as we have been reminded, Jesus takes this very seriously. It is vital that we seek holiness in our personal walk with God and also in our church ministry/leadership because we are going to stand before the judgment seat of Christ. The Lord is with us, ready to provide every assistance we need.

How we need, therefore, to pray and prepare for revival, both personal revival and church revival.

God bless you and inspire you,

Tony

APOLOGY: In the last issue there was a mistake on the hyperlink to my Christian Teaching website (a comma in place of a full stop!) so it didn’t work. The correct version is <https://christianteaching.org.uk>

APPENDIX: OTHER ARTICLES I HAVE WRITTEN

You may find these articles helpful. Feel free to circulate them to others. Further details and hyperlinks to the articles are in the attached file. You can also find the articles, and many others at <https://christianteaching.org.uk>

APOLOGETICS

“Has science squeezed God out?”

“An atheist bus advert–thank God!”

DEVOTIONAL

“Coping with fear”

“How do I know if I have truly forgiven or I’m holding resentment?”

In Network for Revival God has called us to “make ready a people prepared for the Lord.” This includes:

- Encouraging people to seek holiness and true biblical discipleship.
- Encouraging people to major on prayer for Revival.
- Encouraging churches to be radically biblical in the power of the Spirit (see [Church Development](#) for information and resources).
- Encouraging people to “Watch!” for the return of Jesus (Mk 13:32-37 – see [Eschatology](#)).