



## *Network for Revival Prepare Issue 38 - June 2022*

### **For Jesus' sake, pray for Revival**

The more I pray, the more God takes me much deeper into truths I have known for many years. One of these is the appalling suffering of Jesus.

He is the heir of all things through whom God made the universe and who sustains the universe. He is “the radiance of God’s glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by his powerful word” (Heb 1:2-3). Yet he went up to Jerusalem to be “mocked, flogged and crucified” (Matt 20:19). Just think of it, mocked, flogged (with a metal-tipped whip), then crucified – the Creator and Sustainer of the universe.

But the worst suffering was the ultimate degradation and horror of bearing all the sins of humanity. Hence, committed though he was to the atonement, in Gethsemane he “began to be deeply distressed and troubled” (Mk 14:33-34). He said “My soul is overwhelmed with sorrow to the point of death” - an expression of horrific dread (Matt 26:38). Being in anguish, he prayed three times: ‘My Father, if it is possible, may this cup be taken from me. Yet not as I will, but as you will.’ “His sweat was like drops of blood falling to the ground” (Lk 22:44). This was because he was horrified at the prospect of bearing the sin of humanity and the wrath of God against all human sin. It was so terrible. Divine holiness is so infinite, so utterly pure, so totally separated from human sin and he was bearing that sin.

After Gethsemane he endured rejection, beating, spitting, mockery, insults, violence, the crown of thorns, dragging his cross through the streets and crucifixion. He suffered extreme pain within his body, including in his torn flesh, hands, feet, wrists, shoulders and knees. He suffered fever and heart stress, nausea and dizziness.

But, worse than all this, he, who had from eternity lived in the most intimate and unbroken communion with his Father, experienced God-forsakenness. He cried out “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?” (an expression of horrific spiritual pain). He suffered alienation from the Father, and the agony of the cross reached the heart of the Trinity. (God is not bound to suffer like we are, but he chose to suffer). Jesus experienced the deep darkness of hell (which he describes as where there is weeping and gnashing of teeth, blazing fire, agony and torment) far more than the individual unbeliever does in Hell. He took our pain and was crushed for our iniquities.

#### **And yet,**

All too many modern Christians:

- give a half-hearted, rather self-centred response to him.
- don’t bother to talk to him or listen to him most of the time.
- put their own desires and needs before him.
- indulge in the sins for which he died, even justifying such sin.

All too many churches:

- only pray briefly in services or very briefly before committee meetings.
- only welcome and ‘entertain’ people by “doing church,” rather than challenging them to commitment.
- don’t seriously correct the impenitent.
- think they can run, and survive on re-organisation, managerialism and self-effort, doing their own thing without consulting him in prayer.
- do not accept aspects of God’s Word.

Many Jewish people:

- reject Jesus, embracing justification by works and allow antisemitism to cause them to ignore him.

Many unbelievers:

- ignore him and reject him. (If we grieve over loved ones who are heading for a lost eternity, how much more does he grieve over all these whom he loves so deeply, who are heading for a lost eternity).

In view of Jesus' horrific suffering, all this is heart-breaking. What an overwhelmingly powerful motive for in-depth prayer and preparation for Revival! Let's go for it!

## Unusual manifestations in Revival

Some Christians might have problems with the more unusual manifestations which have taken place in past revivals: falling to the ground, seeming to lose consciousness, crying out loud. Similar manifestations are recorded in the NT: Peter and Paul falling into a trance (Acts 10:10; 22:17); speaking in tongues, the house being shaken; the appearance of angels.

Of course, there can be extremes. But we mustn't throw the baby out with the bathwater. The fact is that unusual manifestations do take place when there is a special move of the Holy Spirit. I remember attending a charismatic ministry meeting where individuals were being prayed for and there were some bizarre things happening. A Minister friend of mine (quite strict, no-nonsense person) was at the front praying with people. Eventually, I approached him and he said "Tony, there are some daft things going on here, but God is powerfully at work." He was, and I benefitted.

Andrew Murray, the great man of prayer, who was used in the 1860 Revival in the Cape, South Africa, was initially disturbed by the manifestations he saw – very loud, emotional praying; people singing in the streets after meetings lasting until 3am, etc. He tried to control it and to bring peace and quiet. Eventually, a stranger came up to him and whispered "I think you are the minister of this congregation. Be careful what you do, for it is the Spirit of God that is at work here. I have just come from America, and this is precisely what I witnessed there." Andrew had to come to terms with it. We need to be open to this also.

## Description of the Hebrides Revival (1949-52)

Late one evening, after a service had finished in the Port of Ness and the congregation had gone home, something wonderful happened. "We looked out on the dark, flat, treeless landscape and wonder of wonders, we saw them coming. Lights were moving towards the church: lights of torches as the people converged on the meeting. Suddenly there were about eighty people present! Some brought heaters which they placed in different parts of the hall, and this certainly made a difference! God was coming to our aid and the people were coming to hear the gospel. Soon the place was full of people and of the power of God, and we were conscious of His mighty working in so many hearts. God was in the meetings; God was moving everywhere! It was a wonderful time of mighty spiritual blessing. God was in the midst and drew forth from so many hearts that abandonment to Him and that trust in Him as Saviour and Lord. Many yielded to the Saviour and became staunch pillars in the churches on the island." (*"Sounds from Heaven" by Colin and Mary Peckham, p. 152-3*).

Do it again, Lord

God bless you,

Tony

## APPENDIX

### A NEW ARTICLE I HAVE WRITTEN

**"TRENDS TOWARDS WORLD GOVERNMENT AND POLITICAL OPPRESSION."** This article looks at the undermining of democracy, the growth of globalisation, the decline of US (and UK) influence and growing influence of China and Russia, concerns about surveillance, etc. The NT encourages us to watch out for such trends. A short version is in an attached file to this letter. A full version is available at [Trends-towards-world-government-and-political-oppression.pdf](https://christianteaching.org.uk/Trends-towards-world-government-and-political-oppression.pdf) ([christianteaching.org.uk](https://christianteaching.org.uk))

### 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*

“Is Christianity too other-worldly?”

“Did Adam meet Eve?” (about modern scientific theories on the origin of mankind)

### *DEVOTIONAL*

“Cowards can become heroes” (Pentecost: the power of the Spirit)

“Do Christians believe in three gods?”

### *ESCHATOLOGY*

“Is heaven really up there?”

“The Call to Reconciliation”

### *PASTORAL*

“Anxiety Disorders”

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](#)).