

# Prayer for personal revival

Some people believe that there is a stigma attached to the term revival, while for others it holds a definite fascination and charm. For me personally the word holds a charm, since what is at issue here is God working in His sovereign way. There are many different views on exactly what revival is and how to obtain it. Nevertheless, I am convinced that every believer can and in fact should experience personal revival every day.

The following are ten prayers that you can pray for yourself (and for your congregation) every day in order to gain personal renewal and to experience a life of continuous revival:

- **Lord, change me/us** (Ps.85:7) - Prayer for renewal and change.
- **Lord, I/we humble myself/ourselves before Thee** (Is.57:15) - The Bible is clear about the fact that humbling ourselves is something we have to do (Jas.4:7; 2 Chr.7:14).
- **Lord, cleanse me/us** (1 Jn.1:9) - Prayer for deeper cleansing of sin goes hand in hand with deeper confession of sins.
- **Lord, heal me/us** (Jas.5:13-16) - Prayer for physical healing, but also for spiritual recovery from emotionally hurtful events from the past.
- **Lord, make me/us Holy** (1 Pe.1:16) - Prayer for a holy conduct in life.
- **Lord, guide me/us** (Jn.4:34) - Prayer for the Lord's daily guidance.
- **Lord, fill me/us** (Eph.5:18) - Prayer for the daily filling of the Holy Spirit.
- **Lord, anoint me/us** (Lk4.18-19) - Prayer for equipment to serve the Lord.
- **Lord, use me/us** (1 Cor.12:12-30) - Prayer for willingness to be involved in the congregation.
- **Lord, send me/us** (Mt.28:18-20) - Prayer for involvement in the expansion of God's Kingdom.

In order to experience personal revival, one has to live from the fullness of that which our Lord Jesus Christ did for us on the cross. So many believers think that there are still other things that we have to "achieve" or "accomplish." No. What Christ came to do is complete. We should ask the Father to open and enlighten our eyes and minds through the Holy Spirit so that we will be able to have a deeper and better understanding of the old truths of the gospel.

Pray daily for a deeper relationship with Christ. Pray for a deeper understanding of the complete redemption and deliverance that Christ accomplished for us. Pray for a deeper understanding of the indwelling and workings of the Holy Spirit - the Spirit of Christ in us. Make an effort to live in greater dependence of God the Father. Renewal is to live from the fullness of that which God the Father gave us in Jesus Christ.

## Spiritual check list

The questionnaire that follows may be used to help individuals to evaluate their own lives before the Lord. The questions are truly penetrating and will be of value only if they are answered in complete honesty. Complete the questionnaire in honesty and under the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

**In the world:**

- Do I tell the truth under all circumstances?
- Do I pay my debts?
- Do I curse (even if in my thoughts only)?
- Do I try to evade paying income tax?
- Do I make indecent jokes/tell indecent stories?
- Am I honest in all circumstances?
- Is my relationship with the opposite sex pure in word, deed and thought?

**In my house:**

- Do I live my life at home in an exemplary manner?
- Do those who know me best, believe in me most?
- Do I honour and respect those who serve me daily?
- Do I criticise the church or other people in front of my children?
- Do I treat my husband/wife with courtesy?
- Do I have family prayers with my family?
- Do I regard my possessions/house as mine or as God's?

**At work:**

- Am I known to be a believer?
- Do others see Jesus Christ in me?
- Am I the cause of people ridiculing the church?
- Do I shy away from expressing my faith in the Lord at work?

**Quiet time:**

- What role does quiet time play in my life?
- Do I make time for prayer and intercession every day?
- Do I read the Word of God every day?
- Has there been clear growth in my relationship with God over the past year?
- Is my quiet time really an encounter with God?
- Is quiet time really a priority in my programme for the day?
- How much of my quiet time deals with myself and how much of it is devoted to praising the Lord and to intercession for others?

**Church attendance:**

- Do I like going to church?
- Do I prepare my heart and mind for the sermon?
- Do I go to criticise?
- Do I go to listen to what the minister says or do I go to listen to God?
- Do I pray for my minister so that the Lord will give him a message to preach and he will fearlessly make the ministry of the gospel known?

### **With fellow believers:**

- Do I try to dominate; do I shirk my duty; or do I do my share?
- Can I work together with others and can they work with me?
- Do I truly love those who work with me?
- Do others know me as someone who is interested and concerned rather than someone who only wants to receive and be served?
- Is it my true desire that God's work will be promoted, or do I simply pursue my own interests and honour?
- Can I tolerate it when others receive honour and that I am sometimes not thanked for something I did with great sacrifice?
- Do I seek my own interest or that of others?

### **Have I abandoned all my rights?**

- my right to defend myself;
- my right to be understood;
- my right to possess things;
- my right to be treated with respect/to be respected;
- my right to get recognition for what I have done;
- my right to feel offended/hurt;
- my right to be/become angry;
- my right to choose and exercise my own choice;
- my right to pleasure/enjoyments/nice things/good things;
- my right to my own finances;
- my right to my own ambitions;
- my right to comfort;
- my right to plan my own future;
- my right to privacy.

### **What is revival?**

Revival is simply God amongst His people in power and glory. Duncan Campbell, from the Hebrides Revival, once said: *"Revival is not churches filled with people, but people filled with God."* Revival is people saturated with God, filled with the fullness of God (Col.2:10), the life of Christ revealed in people (Col.1:27). Revival implies a rejuvenation and a return to the Biblical pattern for God's people. The church at Pentecost enjoyed a powerful outpouring of God's Spirit and that resulted in a revival that spread far and wide. Throughout history, God has seen fit to send times of refreshing to His people. In times of revival, Christ is at the very centre as the glorified Lord, to whom all must bow.

Roy Hession described revival as follows: *"Revival is just the life of the Lord Jesus poured into human hearts. Jesus is always victorious. In heaven they are praising Him all the time for His victory. Whatever may be our experience of failure and barrenness, He is never defeated. His power is boundless. We, on our part, have only to get into a right relationship with Him, and we shall see His power being demonstrated in our hearts and lives and service, and His victorious life will fill us and overflow through us to others."*

A God-given conviction of sin amongst God's people is a basic characteristic of revival. This conviction of sin later extends to the unsaved. Confession of sin is thorough and deep and it is accompanied by restitution (returning of stolen goods, apologising, healing of broken relationships, etc.). This results in a change of mind regarding sin and God, the joy of forgiveness through faith in Christ's atoning sacrifice for sin, lives obedient to Jesus Christ, the fellowship of the saints and a missionary zeal to bring the gospel to the lost.

We need to understand that general revival is a sovereign act of God. Revival is, as Jonathan Edwards puts it, "*a special season of mercy*" and the place and timing are according to His will. However, personal revival is a must for every Christian.

### What should I do to have personal revival?

Jim Eliff gives "Five Resolves for Personal Revival:"

- a) **Repent of every known sin.** "*As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten. Therefore, be zealous and repent*" (Re.3:19). **Resolve:** I will not go to bed this evening nor live this day without fully repenting of all known sin against God.
- b) **Forsake all questionable habits and activities.** "*For whatever is not from faith is sin*" (Rm.14:23). **Resolve:** I will not go to bed this evening nor live this day without removing from my life every habit or activity I cannot be absolutely sure is approved by God.
- c) **Make right any wrongs between yourself and others.** "*Therefore if you bring your gift to the altar, and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift there before the altar, and go your way. First be reconciled to your brother, and then come and offer your gift*" (Mt.5:23-24). **Resolve:** I will not go to bed this evening nor live this day without doing all that is possible to correct any wrongs between myself and others.
- d) **Commune with God through prayer and the Word.** "*Revive me, o Lord, according to your Word*" (Ps.119:107). "*Pray without ceasing*" (1 Th.5:17). **Resolve:** I will not go to bed this evening nor live this day without spending quiet moments with God in prayer and sincerely meditating on His Word.
- e) **Trust God to use you as His instrument in the lives of others.** "*Brethren, if anyone among you wanders from the truth, and someone turns him back, let him know that he who turns a sinner from the error of his ways, will save a soul from death and cover a multitude of sins*" (Jas.5:19-20). **Resolve:** I will not go to bed this night nor live this day without asking and expecting God to use me as an effective instrument of revival in someone's life.

### The church needs revival

There is a broad consensus amongst Christian leaders that the church in South Africa needs revival. The major means of preparing for revival is by putting away sin, a new obedience to the Word of God and by pleading with God to send revival.

## Spiritual Check-list

The following list will help you to measure your own life against the standard of the Word. Read through this list prayerfully and confess any sin that may occur in your own life and turn your back on that sin.

Every YES answer is a sin in your life that needs to be confessed. *"Therefore, to him that knoweth to do good and doeth it not, to him it is sin"* (Jas.4:17 KJV).

1. 1 Th.5:18 - *"In everything give thanks for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you."* Do you worry about anything? Have you failed to thank God for all things, the seemingly bad as well as the good? Do you neglect to give thanks at meal time?
2. Eph.3:20 - *"Now unto him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us..."* Do you fail to attempt things for God because you are not talented enough? Do feelings of inferiority keep you from trying to serve God? When you do accomplish something for Christ, do you fail to give Him all the glory?
3. Ac.1:8 - *"But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you; and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth."* Have you failed to be a witness with your life for Christ? Have you felt it was enough to just live your Christianity and not witness with your mouth to the lost?
4. Rm.12:3 - *"For I say...to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think."* Are you proud of your accomplishments, your talents, your family? Do you fail to see others as better than yourself, more important than yourself in the body of Christ? Do you insist on your own rights? Do you think as a Christian you are doing quite well? Do you rebel when God wants to change you?
5. Eph.4:31 - *"Let all bitterness, and wrath and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice."* Do you complain, find fault, argue? Do you have a critical spirit? Do you carry a grudge against Christians of another group because they don't see eye to eye with you on all things? Do you speak unkindly about people when they are not present? Are you angry with yourself? Others? God?
6. 1 Cor.6:19 - *"What, know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own."* Are you careless with your body? Are you guilty of not caring for it as the temple of the Holy Spirit in eating and exercise habits? Do you defile your body with unholy sex acts?
7. Eph.4:29 - *"Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth."* Do you ever use filthy language, tell slightly off-colour jokes? Do you condone others doing so in your presence, in your home?
8. Eph.4:27 - *"Neither give place to the devil."* Do you fail to see you are a "landing strip" for Satan when you open your mind through T.M., yoga, séances, psychic predictions, occult literature and movies? Do you get advice for daily living from

- horoscopes rather than from God? Do you let Satan use you to thwart the cause of Christ in your church through criticism, gossip, non-support?
9. Rm.12:11 - *"Not slothful in business."* Do you fail to pay your debts on time? Do you avoid paying them altogether? Do you charge more on credit cards than you can pay when due? Do you neglect to keep honest income tax records? Do you engage in any shady business deals whether as an employer or employee?
  10. 1 Cor.8:9 - *"But take heed lest by any means this liberty of yours become a stumbling block to them that are weak."* Do you feel you can do anything you want to do because the Bible says you are free in Christ? Even though you were strong enough not to fall, do you fail to take responsibility for a weaker Christian who has fallen because of following your example?
  11. Heb.10:25 - *"Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together."* Are your irregular or spasmodic in church attendance? Do you attend preaching services in body only, whispering, reading or planning while God's Word is being preached? Are you skipping prayer meetings?
  12. Col.3:9 - *"Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds."* Do you ever lie? Exaggerate? Do you fail to see "little white lies" as sins? Do you tell things the way you want them rather than the way they really are?
  13. 1 Pe.2:11 - *"Dearly beloved...abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul."* Are you guilty of a lustful eye toward the opposite sex? Do you fill your mind with sex oriented TV programmes, movies, books, magazines? Their covers? Centre folds? Do you indulge in any lustful activity God's Word condemns - fornications, adultery, perversion?
  14. Jn.13:35 - *"By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another."* Are you guilty of being a part of factions and divisions in your church? Would you rather add fuel to a misunderstanding than help correct it? Have you loved only the ones in your own church, feeling those of other denominations are not of the body of Christ? Are you secretly pleased over the misfortunes of another? Annoyed by their successes?
  15. Col.3:13 - *"Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye."* Have you failed to forgive someone for all he/she may have said or done against you? Have you turned certain people off? Are you holding grudges?
  16. Eph.4:28 - *"Let him who stole steal no more: but rather let him labour."* Do you steal from your employer by doing less work, staying on the job less time than you are paid for? Do you under-pay?
  17. Eph.5:16 - *"Redeeming the time, because the days are evil."* Do you waste time? The time of others? Do you spend time watching TV trash, reading cheap books, procrastinating?
  18. Mt.6:24 - *"No man can serve two masters...ye cannot serve God and mammon."* Is your goal in life to make as much money as possible? Accumulate things? Have you with-held God's share of your income from Him? Is money your god?
  19. Mt.23:28 - *"Even so ye also outwardly appear righteous unto men, but within ye are full of hypocrisy and iniquity."* Do you know in your heart you are a fake, just

pretending to be a real Christian? Are you hiding behind church membership to cover a life still full of sin? Are you faking Christianity for social status or acceptance in your church, community? Do you smile piously during the Sunday sermon but live in your sin all week? Are you the same person in your home as you are trying to impress other people that you are?

20. Php.4:8 - *"Finally brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things."* Do you enjoy listening to gossip? Passing it on? Do you believe rumours or partial truths especially about an enemy or your competitor? Do you fail to spend time every day reading the Bible? Do you fail to think on the things of God - only good and true and pure things - always?

### **A Prayer for Revival (by: C.H.Spurgeon)**

"O God, send us the Holy Spirit! Give us both the breath of spiritual life and the fire of unconquerable zeal. O You are our God, answer us by fire, we pray! Answer us both by wind and fire, and then we shall see that You are God indeed. The Kingdom comes not, and the work is flagging. O, that You will send the wind and the fire. You will do this when we are all of one accord, all believing, all expecting, all prepared by prayer.

Lord, bring us to this waiting state! God, send us a season of glorious disorder. O, for a sweep of the wind that will set the seas in motion, and make our ironclad brethren, now lying so quietly at anchor, to roll from stem to stern!

O, for the fire to fall again - fire which shall affect the most stolid! O, that such fire might first sit upon the disciples, and then fall on all around! O God, You are ready to work with us today even as You did then. Stay not, we plead with You, but work at once. Break down every barrier that hinders the incoming of Your might! Give us now both hearts of flame and tongues of fire to preach Your word, for Jesus' sake! Amen!"