

Commentary: Can America see another great revival and spiritual awakening?

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American Christians yearn for the Holy Spirit of God to move and usher in the next national revival and Great Awakening, but it may not come.

A group of hungry Kingdom-seekers prayed and the Holy Spirit of God moved mightily across the colonies in the early 1700s, ushering in what history calls “The First Great Awakening.” History books call it a time of “religious fervor,” but it was sovereign God moving across this land bringing people to himself, influencing the founding fathers as young men, and bringing hundreds of thousands into the Kingdom in a matter of months. We fully became a Christian nation overnight.

In the 1800s, another group of hungry Kingdom-seekers prayed again, then God moved again in what we know as “The Second Great Awakening” and swept down the Eastern Seaboard and moved heavily in the southern states. Hundreds of thousands came to know and follow Christ in a matter of months, and churches were started all over the south. It so affected the south that it solidified the Christian heritage in the Deep South.

Where’s the Third Great Awakening?

People born in the communities touched by these movements have been born to spiritual privilege. They know what it is like to experience the love of Christ through many people when life hits them wrong.

Even the most rebellious, and even evil, of people have Christ followers

speaking love and truth into their lives, praying for them, and showing them Christ's love. When life hits wrong, the church – no matter the denomination – and Christ followers show up to help those in need and to be there to comfort and pray for them.

Imagine being raised in a community and state where there was virtually no Christian presence and the hope of Christ was not present or presented. That is the case with most western states. They look for hope in everything in the world but Christ himself.

Have you ever wondered why the western states are mostly non-Christian, with non-Christian values, and many antagonistic to Christianity? Most of the western states have around 8 percent legitimate followers of Christ. That is 92 percent who do not have a personal relationship with Christ.

Why? There has not been a real “Third Great Awakening” which moved across the US through the western states, ushering hundreds of thousands into a relationship with Christ in a matter of months.

We have not seen anything like this, and we may not see it either.

‘A big if’

Revival and awakening are based upon a big if:

“If my people who are called by my name will humble themselves and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from Heaven and forgive their sin and heal their land” (2 Chronicles 7:14).

What if the reason we haven't seen true revival and awakening is because we have substituted a cultural form of Christianity for so long that we hardly recognize the real thing? I have been guilty of the following and believe we have strayed as a generation in a number of areas.

First, are we as American Christians really paying the price in prayer, seeking God's presence like those who did it for us in the 1700s and the 1800s? Those followers of Christ paid a dear price in time, effort and spiritual war to seek God to move across the land.

This is not a value in most churches. What's valued? The next event, program, silver-bullet sermon, worship experience and not disturbing too many of the wrong people so the pastor won't lose his job. I understand. I have been there and done that for 22 years. I have been as guilty as the next guy.

Second, we may be more like Jonah than Jesus in a few ways. Jonah and the people of his day loved their nation more than their neighbor. Jonah despised those who had radically different political and theological views than he did. He would rather them go to hell than have a liberal, or someone with different religious beliefs, live next door to him.

Third, do we really want God's will to be done and his Kingdom to come?

God just wanted to send an awakening to Nineveh, a godless immoral city of 600,000 people. He wanted the greatest revival and awakening to happen in the most godless place on the planet. These people made ISIS look like playground bullies. Jonah would rather "nuke 'em till they glow and shoot 'em in the dark" than reach out with the love of Christ to those who hate the US.

Friends, the gospel of Jesus Christ is the only thing that will change a person's heart.

Last, have we rejected the power of God for the means of man? Have we substituted the political ways of man to achieve the work of God?

Trying to solve a spiritual problem with political means never works. Protesting and picketing the abortion issue has done little over the past 40

years to quell the tsunami of abortions.

I heard of one man who met families outside of abortion clinics, who did not wave a sign or chant a slogan but simply offered to pay for the birth of the baby and to help the family financially raise them. He was not independently wealthy, but he trusted God to provide for those families through his work, and God did!

Real love is demonstrated by bearing the burdens of one another. Until we seek his Kingdom come, his will be done, his way, we won't see the power of God come upon this nation once again.

I hope we as a nation don't have to experience the pain and agony that Jonah did. Jonah so refused to love his neighbor and desire for them to know God that he was put in a horrible pit of a whale's belly until he would obey. Even then he obeyed with a bad attitude.

Will we see revival and awakening?

I believe it all depends on our heart. If our heart is for Christ's love to fill us and flow through us to whosoever, then we may very well!

But if our goal is to regain some golden age of patriotism, nationalism and religious dominance, then I believe we can't expect more than what Jonah got. Until we really mean it when we sing, "I surrender all" to the kingship and Lordship of Jesus, then we cannot expect to see his presence here.

My heart's desire is to see God's people seeking him across this land, seeking his presence, turning from the wrong ways of trying to handle spiritual problems and sharing the message of Christ to whosoever because the gospel of Christ is the power of God to salvation!

Every great revival and awakening have begun with a passionate group of Kingdom-seekers faithfully praying for the presence of the Spirit of God to

sweep across their nation. What will God say about you and your loyalties to the values of Jonah or to those of Jesus?

What will history say about you?

Will it say that you were part of the repentant group that prayed until God swept across this land once again, bringing millions to himself overnight, changing America back to a Christian nation once again?

“The goal of this command is love, which comes from a pure heart and a good conscience and a sincere faith” (1 Timothy 1:5).

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