

Pastor's Perspective: What is the meaning of Revival?



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There has been a lot of conversation surrounding the revival experience at Asbury University in Wilmore Kentucky. The word “revival” can have different meanings, especially in our part of the world. In our culture, when one hears the word “revival”, one likely first thinks about a planned set of worship services over the course of several days, led by a guest preacher. Of course, the purpose and hope behind these planned revival meetings is to experience the other meaning of the word. We could look at any number of definitions, but one that seems to capture what has happened at Asbury comes from the great 19th century preacher, Charles Finney. He defined revival this way: “Revival is a renewed conviction of sin and repentance, followed by an intense desire to live in obedience to God. It is giving up one’s will to God in deep humility.”

At Asbury, what happened was hardly a planned event. In response to a message from Romans 12, a group of about 18 or 19 students decided to stay and continue to pray, following their normal chapel service on February 8. This turned into



Crowd during revival at Asbury University

an impromptu 16 straight days of worship and seeking more of God’s presence and the Spirit’s work in the hearts of these students. The phenomena attracted thousands from across the U.S. and even some from overseas who desired to experience God’s pouring out of His Spirit. In addition, the revival at Asbury has inspired students at other universities (Lee

University, Samford University, Belmont University and more) to seriously seek the Lord and this revival experience at their own campuses.

So, what relevance does this have for us as residents of Pelahatchie, Mississippi? Well, this kind of revival experience isn’t limited to college campuses. This kind of revival typically begins within the church. Per-

sonally, I pray often for this kind of revival to come to all of our churches in Pelahatchie. Because not only would this produce blessings for our churches, the benefits would most definitely spill out into our community, as well. The overflow could mean restored relationships, restored marriages, forgiveness of past wrongs, perhaps even supernatural healings, if you believe in such things. What could it look like if God did God things and poured out His Spirit on Pelahatchie?

Historically, these revival experiences are preceded by consistent and earnest prayer. Who knows how long students and faculty at Asbury University had been praying to see revival come to their campus? But, I do not believe it is a coincidence that the movement started by 18 or 19 students who decided to stay after a chapel service and ask God to move. What if the people of Pelahatchie prayed and asked God to do something special in our town? During His famous Sermon on the Mount, in Matthew 7, Jesus taught His followers: “Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives, and the one who seeks finds, and to the one who knocks it will be opened.” If you are of the praying kind, would you join me in asking, seeking, and knocking for God to send revival to Pelahatchie?

Photo courtesy Asbury University

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