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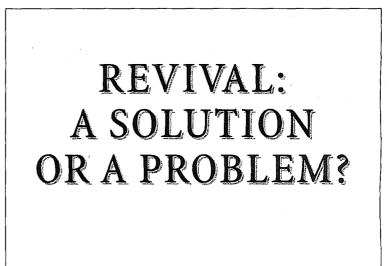
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A Quarterly for Church Leadership

VOLUME 11 NUMBER 3 SUMMER 2002

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Reformation & Revival Journal (ISSN 1071-7277), (U.S.P.S. 011-791), is published quarterly, for \$28 per year, or \$48 for two years, by Reformation & Revival Ministries, Inc., 630 Paxton Place, Carol Stream, Illinois 60188-9244. Second-class postage has been paid at Carol Stream, Illinois, and additional mailing offices. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to *Reformation & Revival Journal*, P.O. Box 88216, Carol Stream, Illinois 60188-0216.

Reformation & Revival Journal is indexed in Christian Periodical Index and ATLA Religion Database, published by the American Theological Library Association, 250 S. Wacker Dr., 16th Flr., Chicago, IL 60606, E-mail: atla@atla.com, http://www.atla.com/.

Reformation & Revival Journal is published four times each year by Reformation & Revival Ministries, Inc., a not-for-profit teaching ministry organized in the state of Illinois in 1991. The ministry is committed to the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as the infallible Word of God and is in essential agreement with the confessional statements of historic Reformation theology. The purpose of this ministry is centered in its name:

- 1. To encourage reformation in local Christian churches worldwide.
- 2. To promote the cause of *revival* and spiritual awakening through prayer and the provision of resources to aid Christian leaders.

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REFORMATION & REVIVAL JOURNAL

A Quarterly Journal for Church Leadership Published by Reformation & Revival Ministries, Inc. P.O. Box 88216, Carol Stream, Illinois 60188-0216 (630) 980-1810

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REVIVAL: A SOLUTION OR A PROBLEM?

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INTRODUCTION



John H. Armstrong

for some reforming Christians in our time, revival is neither biblical nor desirable. Such believers sincerely think revivals solve nothing and leave in their wake problems untold. When these brothers and sisters hear the word revival the first thing that comes to their minds is "chaos" or "religious enthusiasm." Simply put, they think nothing of lasting value is ever given to the church in revival.

The majority of Christians, at least in the West, talk a lot about revival these days. Most of the ideas such Christians have formed of revival are inadequate at best. These days the word is tossed about to describe everything from a series of evangelistic meetings to new charismatic displays of gifts and phenomena. For far too long stadiums full of men and women have been labeled "revivals." It makes you wonder, doesn't it, if the word is really worth keeping? And if you use it what difference does it really make?

The simple fact is clear to those who read the New Testament carefully: The Holy Scriptures speak of copious showers of blessing, given in this present age, that are the gift of the Holy Spirit to the church. These blessings are seasons and times of God's determination. The late J. Edwin Orr, after a lifetime of studying revival movements, said the best way to describe a movement of God in revival is "times of refreshing [that] come from the presence of the Lord" (Acts 3:20). I believe such seasons are still sent by God. In fact, I think there is good reason to believe that many parts of the body of Christ are experiencing such showers in our own time.

One thing we know for sure. True revival *must* be centered in Jesus Christ. True revivals have had a number of unique characteristics over the years but all that are biblical are Christ-centered. This is not surprising since the Spirit was given to bring glory to Christ (John 14:25-31; 16:12-15). If you desire his glory in this present age, join me in hoping and praying for a true revival in our time.