



Reformation
REVIVAL
JOURNAL

REVIVAL:
A SOLUTION
OR A PROBLEM?

A Quarterly for Church Leadership

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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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The conviction of the staff and editors of the *Reformation & Revival Journal* is that awakening, of the kind seen in the First Great Awakening in America, wedded to the doctrinal concerns of the historic Protestant Reformation as expressed in the terms *sola scriptura*, *sola gratia*, and *sola fide*, is needed in our generation.

The views expressed in this publication should be considered as the personal opinions of the authors and are not to be taken as an official editorial perspective.

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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.