

Time for new wine?

How is Renewal and Revival going to happen in Britain in our generation?

What do I mean by these terms?

The last officially recorded 'revival' in Britain was on the Island of Lewis (Hebrides) in 1949 -52 . It is when God moves in the power of the Holy Spirit across a broad band of people in society, to simultaneously awaken them to a need for repentance and faith in Christ. It is not something humanly engineered, although it is always



preceded by faithful, holy intercession over a period of time. Just because revivals have tended to be in different countries at different times, we should not restrict God to national boundaries. The Wesleyan revival was however primarily in England, while in New England (USA) it was Whitefield's ministry that was God's instrument for revival rather than that of the Wesleys, despite John Wesley's years spent in ministry over there. Culture, the language of the heart, is still often only truly understood and practised in ethnic or national terms despite the worldwide web, etc.

Renewal is what many of us experienced in the 1970's through the ministries of David Watson, then again in different forms with Luis Palau, Billy Graham and John Wimber in the 1980's and 90's. It is when the Holy Spirit moves in a powerful way within the Church, such that the Church is freshly empowered and fired up for mission.

Some may quibble over my definitions which are very brief and generalised. However, the answer to my own question is, we do not know how God is going to move among us in our generation, other than by noticing what He is already doing.

So what are the seeds of Renewal (Holy Spirit fresh empowering for the Church), and Revival (societal spiritual hunger for what Jesus has to offer) that we can see?

I suggest 3 areas, for you to consider. Please get back to me with what you are noticing.

The first is through the united testimony across church denominations of Christ's love. Jesus said, 'By this will all people know that you are my disciples, by your love one for another.'



Second through letting go of the old and welcoming in the new. 'New wine needs new wineskins' said Jesus. So holding loose to our formats and human-made formalities.

Thirdly, through our worship being 'in Spirit and in truth' (John 4: 24). This means that biblical

teaching will be accompanied by fervent prayer, as directed by the Spirit of Jesus.

I do wonder if a contemporary revival will not also be accompanied by persecution, as in the past. As society descends into more and more godlessness, the witness of the faithful who hold fast to God's true calling, will shine like a beacon of light to those facing the shipwreck of their souls.

Is all this prophetic or way off beam? The choice is yours to make, or you can simply watch and wait. Meanwhile, I hope I've got you thinking and praying,

Yours in God's service, Charles.