

True and False Revival

Joseph Herrin (5-10-08)

In recent days I have had several people write to me and ask for my thoughts concerning that which is being billed as "revival" in Lakeland, Florida. What began there is now branching out worldwide. A couple of students from Morningstar brought this same spirit back with them and it is now being touted by Rick Joyner, Bob Jones and others as the start of a major revival. On the site of the old Heritage International headquarters of Jim and Tammy Bakker, Morningstar is holding nightly meetings and they are inviting Christians throughout the world to come and experience what is going on.

Yesterday, I received a message by Andrew Strom that spoke of what is being billed as "revival," this message being forwarded to me by a sister in Christ. I will quote from a section of it that describes the character of what is transpiring. This movement began through the "ministry" of Todd Bentley, a young man who has in recent years, while serving as a minister, had his body heavily tattooed and pierced.

[Begin Quote]

Todd Bentley has declared that his Florida anointing is the most "contagious" that he has ever imparted to people. (In other words, the most easily transferable). And indeed this seems to be the case. It is spreading rapidly throughout the world.

But what exactly is this anointing? One observer of the Florida revival notes: "Todd Bentley constantly manifests his "anointing" by shaking his head back and forth, and by his body physically shaking. These manifestations also happen frequently in those who he imparts to. He will even wave his arms over the audience, shouting, "Fire! Fire! Fire!" and then people in the audience will start manifesting. Some appear to be convulsing, and some even as if they are being thrashed by a spirit."

In a CBN News interview, Todd stated: "Our focus here in Florida every night is I lay hands on every single person who comes - whether it's 5,000, 10,000 - And I'm praying every night, 'God, give it away, give it away, give it away.' And that's the focus here: Impartation."

And indeed there are more and more reports of this anointing being transmitted from Florida to other states and nations across the globe.

As we have already seen, a report from England tells of a preacher who brought Todd's anointing back from Florida and now it is manifesting in his UK meetings: "Fire, a burning sensation, was felt all over people's bodies... There were outbursts of joy, drunken- ness and spontaneous healings throughout the meeting."

A man from Clearwater, Florida says that a number of people from his fellowship have attended the revival and then brought the 'anointing' back with them. Here is what he personally saw:

"These are the effects that I have witnessed on people who have attended this movement and either have had hands laid on them or claim to have been imparted with "the spirit":

- They come back with this kind of childlike drunken stupor.
- Descriptions of a burning sensation either in their veins, heads or stomachs.
- Descriptions of being washed back and forth like the waves in the ocean.
- Dancing about like drunk...
- Inappropriate yelling and screaming like they're at a football game; -Young men whistling over and over and holding their heads and claiming that they "feel the Holy Spirit about to split them in two"; -One young man's back two teeth turned completely to some metallic finish.
- People with their eyes rolled in the back of their heads and weaving around like they're lost.
- Women just gyrating and pulsating like they're being ravaged from behind from some unseen force.
- Drunken uncontrollable laughter in the middle of a solemn prayer time.
- People being "slain in the spirit"... just falling down and being unable to move (like something's holding them down)..."

A Spirit-filled pastor that I know from the UK who has been following Todd Bentley's ministry closely for some years wrote to me about what he himself has observed since the year 2000:

"My difficulty with Todd Bentley's ministry is not whether he has recently covered himself with tattoos or pierced himself silly, but the SOURCE of his power. He keeps changing his position on this. Sometimes he says it's the Holy Spirit and a lot of the time it's his angels."

"Many have said that they believe that Florida is a 'mixture.' Personally, I do not believe 'mixture' is involved. I believe these deceiving spirits have hijacked Todd's ministry. Either the healings are of God or they are not. Which is it?"

"People can be healed in spiritualist churches. I have witnessed, close-up, first hand, people being instantly healed by mediums and faith healers. I have also seen people healed by the power of the Holy Spirit. To begin with there is no discernible difference. However the counterfeit healings soon begin to either go wrong or something far worse comes upon the person."

"When God heals someone - He adds 'no sorrow.'"

"I know Todd started off OK - I was there in his early meetings. In September 2000 I stood in front of Todd and gave him the warning that God gave me for him. "Beware, the leaven of the Pharisees, lest an angelic leaven enters your ministry."

"One month later, according to Todd's own account, at a meeting in Grants Pass Oregon, Cal Pierce walked in with Branham's 'Healing Revival' angel in tow, Todd saw and accepted this spirit without reservation. His 'angels' have been with him ever since."

"I have written to Todd on numerous occasions and reminded him of God's warning, alas to no avail."

"When Todd Bentley conducted a healing meeting in a large charismatic church here in England in 2005, he laid hands on many people who were apparently healed. I know of at least one instance where a pastor's wife with cancer was prayed for by Todd. Soon afterwards she heard voices in her head telling her to 'drown herself just like her father did'. The poor woman ended up in a mental hospital, I believe she still has the cancer."

"No-one is following up or keeping records of what happens to people who have hands laid on them by Todd or others like him."

"I have kept records as far as I can, concerning this particular church. Over a relatively short period, there has been a dramatic increase in premature deaths, cancers, marriage break-ups, sickness and disease amongst the congregation where the leadership have allowed this type of ministry into their

church. Many people left the church in fear.”

"These are the consequences of following this type of 'ministry' which no-one is either aware of, or wants to address. I know, I have visited the people in hospital and attended one of the funerals."

[END QUOTE]

Those of you who have been receiving these postings know that the Spirit of Christ led me to go camping for nearly the entire month of April. The Lord communicated to me many things that He is about to do in His church. As was testified in the heavenly sign in the constellation Bootes, Yahshua is coming back as a cutter of grass to remove all flesh from His church. He must have a Bride that has been purified, cleansed of all of the sin and idolatry of the world. There is coming a fiery cleansing that few will be willing to pass through. Many will fall away, but a remnant will be purified.

In the writings sent out in April, I was led to speak much about fire. Christ said, "I have come to cast fire on the earth, and how constrained I am until it is kindled." This fire speaks of the difficult trials that His people must pass through. The flesh must be consumed that a spiritual creature might arise. This is pictured typically through the free will offering where flesh was laid upon the fire of the altar to be consumed. The apostle Paul declares in Romans 12:1-2 that presenting ourselves as a "living sacrifice" is our "spiritual service of worship."

This is what Yahweh considers true worship; submitting to the working of the cross. What greater honor could a man or woman demonstrate toward Christ than to follow Him into suffering and sorrows that are designed specifically to bring an end to the bondage of corruption and loose them into the freedom of holiness in the Spirit?

As one reads about the events taking place in Lakeland, Florida and at Morningstar, that which is described is not the sober surrender of the saints of God to the working of the cross. Rather it is a carnival atmosphere. Shouting, whistling, jerking, drunkenness, sensuality, etc., are the order of the day. The word *carnival* literally interpreted means "flesh rising." It shares a similar root in the Greek with the word carnal, which the apostle Paul used as a term to describe Christians that were acting as if they were still unregenerate men in bondage to the flesh.

Sadly, Todd Bentley and Rick Joyner have taken the role of the carnival barker. They stand and proclaim the wonders to be seen and the move to be experienced, and they are not ashamed to ask that people spend their money while doing so. In an article on the revival posted on Morningstar's website, Rick Joyner has written the following:

The History and Future of the Present Revival - Part 1

An extraordinary move of God is now breaking out in America. The breakout in Lakeland has been spectacular and is growing fast. We are experiencing a breakout at our base at Heritage, which in some ways has already surpassed anything we have experienced before. It, too, seems to be growing in intensity, and people are starting to come from far distances to experience it. News about other moves of God is also beginning to show up on the spiritual radar...

How do we embrace it? Go to Lakeland, Heritage, or go anywhere else that a breakout is happening. True revival is contagious. What is happening at Heritage was sparked by some of our students going to Lakeland, and as they were describing what they experienced in their Bible class, something like a whirlwind came into the room. Soon both of our schools, then our staff, and then parents who came to pick up their kids from school, were all caught up into what many called the most powerful presence of the Lord they had ever experienced.

The presence of the Lord was so strong that we had to continue with nightly meetings...

For those of you who want to come to Heritage, we still have rooms available at the Heritage Grand, and are presently holding meetings nightly at 7:00 p.m. Call 1-800-542-0278, Monday through Friday 8 a.m. - 6 p.m. EST to reserve a room. They are filling up quickly.

[End Quote]

It doesn't take long for the church to promote, market and capitalize on what they view as a move of God. The money changers and merchants are still present in the temple of God. It is interesting to note that Morningstar purchased the property formerly belonging to Jim Bakker and the PTL Club. The fall of this man and his ministry was largely precipitated by a pursuit of mammon. There were Rolls Royce's on display within the buildings on the property. Christians far and wide were enticed with a message of prosperity

and blessing. The fruit of this became evident as both Jim and Tammy Bakker were revealed to be involved in sexual sins, and accused of mishandling funds.

It causes one to wonder at the wisdom of Morningstar purchasing this property and keeping the name Heritage, for there is an evil heritage to this place, and the spirit that once ruled the property appears to have remained. Even as Jim Bakker invited Christians to come to the property to invest their money in condos, or to stay temporarily at its Christian resorts, so too is Rick Joyner telling people to come to Heritage, rent a room at the Heritage Grand, and he urges them to do so soon for rooms “are filling up quickly.”

To merchandise this spiritual event further, slick ads and videos have been created that make what is happening appear exciting, enticing people to come and participate in that which Morningstar has to offer.



Ad from Morningstar site.

Those of you who have read many of the writings I have posted in the past know that I have on occasions quoted from some writing of Rick Joyner. The Spirit has used some of the prophetic words that have come from Mr. Joyner in a profound way in my life. I do not doubt that he is a Christian who is a fellow partaker of the Holy Spirit of Christ. Yet even spiritually gifted men can fail. Rick Joyner wrote of this peril in the book “The Final Quest.” He described ascending the mountain of God as he was battling the forces of darkness that surrounded the mountain. As he went higher his vision and skill increased, yet from a great height he almost slipped and fell on some of the vomit that came from the demonic vultures. He then describes taking his sword and driving it deeply into the rock and tying himself off to it. The eagle who was speaking to him, symbolizing the spirit of prophecy, told him that what he had done was wise, for he had symbolically anchored himself to Christ the Rock by means of the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. Rick

Joyner was warned that men can fall from any height.

Morningstar Ministries has risen to a great height. They are a pronounced influence among the body of Christ. Yet there remains the demonic vomit that can cause a fall. Those who fail to anchor themselves to the Rock by utilizing the sword of the Spirit which is the word of God, will surely experience a tragic fall.

Much of what Rick Joyner has written bears upon it the breath of the Spirit. The Spirit has spoken to me many times through his writings, and I have found myself reading a while, then getting down on my knees and praying as I have been struck with some conviction, or granted some insight into some kingdom truth. We must remember, however, that no matter how much a man has been used of the Spirit, the saints are commanded to “test all things.” Even Peter strayed off into error, precipitating a public rebuke from the apostle Paul. The following admonishments have been given to the church.

I John 4:1

Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God; because many false prophets have gone out into the world.

Acts 17:11

Now these were more noble-minded than those in Thessalonica, for they received the word with great eagerness, examining the Scriptures daily, to see whether these things were so.

I Corinthians 14:29

And let two or three prophets speak, and let the others pass judgment.

I Thessalonians 5:21-22

But examine everything carefully; hold fast to that which is good; abstain from every form of evil.

The Lord has testified that in these last days that deception and error will increase. The surest way to be drawn into error is to hold impure desires in our heart. We must seek after those things that Christ is seeking. He is looking for a crucified people whose flesh has been dealt with that a spiritual creation might arise. This process is one of suffering, which the image of the cross fully reveals. There is a cross appointed to every disciple of Christ.

Luke 14:27

“Whoever does not carry his own cross and come after Me cannot be My disciple.”

People, there is only one path to having an increased presence and anointing of the Holy Spirit in our lives. This process is pictured in the olive from which the anointing oil of the temple was derived. The flesh of the ripe olives had to be crushed. It was this crushing process that released the oil that was used to light the lamps of the temple. If we would be anointed people, manifesting the presence of the Spirit, if we would be lights in the world, we too must allow Yahweh to crush our flesh. Only then can He release a fuller anointing of His Spirit within us.

The so called “revival” that began in Lakeland, Florida is not the product of men and women leading crucified lives. There is symbolism in the extreme tattoos and body piercing of Todd Bentley, something that is also a manifestation among the progeny of Jim Bakker, as his own son Jay is extremely tattooed, and many of the young people at Morningstar are also following this trend.

Tattooing serves as a parable of those who would glorify the flesh. A tattoo directs attention to the flesh of man. Tattoos do not magnify the Spirit of Christ, for the Spirit of Christ is magnified when a gentle, humble, loving and quiet spirit is revealed through the life of a person. Tattoos direct the attention to the flesh, as do body piercings. It is no wonder that the manifestations that are coming forth in the ministry of Todd Bentley are also fleshly. The spirit that controls a man will be revealed in his physical person.

This trend of tattoos and body piercing has been gaining much popularity in recent years. There is a reason for it. As the church becomes more carnal, more directed by a sensual spirit, this becomes manifest in outward and visible ways.

Some would argue that we must accept all men as they are. We must minister to those who are immersed in the world and all of its ways. I do not deny this. What the church has become deceived about is in thinking that it is acceptable to Christ that those who come to Him remain conformed to the world. All who come to Christ are to enter into a process of being conformed to His image.

Jay Bakker, the son of Jim Bakker, was involved in a “ministry” in Atlanta

about six years ago. I went to the website that spoke of it. The staff all had personal biographies listed, with photos and testimonies of the things they were pursuing. Over an over I read of members of this "ministry" who were into tattoos, body piercing, gothic styles, cigars, the most wild and radical music, and other forms of carnal entertainment. Their great theme was that God loves everyone and accepts them for who they are.

The deception was greatly apparent. Yes, Christ died for the ungodly, BUT HE CAME TO SET THE CAPTIVES FREE! He did not shed His blood, and send forth the Holy Spirit that men might remain in the bondage of sin. Consider the Gadarene demoniac whom Christ set free. This man was uncontrollable. He could not be bound with chains. He wandered naked among the tombs. This is a parable of the spiritual condition of mankind.

Today there are myriads of people who are uncontrollable. Their lusts and passions drive them. They are unable to be restrained in their affections and actions. They are given to all manner of sensual conduct and wickedness. They wander around in a place of death, severed from the life of Christ, naked before the eyes of God. Yet when Christ comes and sets them free a change is mandated.

Mark 5:15

And they came to Yahshua and observed the man who had been demon-possessed sitting down, clothed and in his right mind, the very man who had had the "legion"; and they became frightened.

Christians are no longer to walk around in mindless pursuit of the desires and passions of the flesh. They are no longer to be conformed to a dark and sinful world. Even as this demoniac was transformed by an encounter with Christ, so too must the church be. It is a great deception that has come upon the children of God who come to Christ and yet remain uncontrollable, glorifying the flesh, and pursuing those things that are contrary to conformity to Christ.

In the book of Acts we read of a true revival. When the Holy Spirit was manifested, the people repented. They turned away from their evil practices and began pursuing that which is holy and acceptable unto God.

Acts 19:19-20

And many of those who practiced magic brought their books together and began burning them in the sight of all; and they counted up the price of them

and found it fifty thousand pieces of silver. So the word of the Lord was growing mightily and prevailing.

An increase in holiness is the surest sign of a true move of God. What are men and women flocking to Lakeland, Florida and Heritage International to see and receive? Are they hearing a message of repentance from their worldly conformity? Are they being instructed to take up the cross and mortify their flesh? No! They are coming to experience something that makes them feel good about themselves while they remain spiritually unwashed and continue in their fleshly defilement. Let them begin to cast off their body piercings, renounce their tattoos, get rid of their sensual and worldly music, separate themselves from all that defiles, and take up their cross and follow Christ. Then there will be true revival. Then, when the flesh is crushed, the Holy Spirit of Christ will truly be manifested in greater measure in their lives, producing the fruit of holy conduct and righteous living.

I John 3:7-8

Little children, let no one deceive you; the one who practices righteousness is righteous, just as He is righteous; the one who practices sin is of the devil; for the devil has sinned from the beginning.

May you be blessed with peace and understanding in these days.