

Seven Steps To An Effective Revival

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Introduction

Revival is the most important ministry available to the local church. We estimate that only 50% of the churches in the Georgia Baptist Convention have revival services in a year. Yet, revival is the great need of the individual Christian and the congregation at large. One reason many churches are neglecting revival services is that they believe revival services are no longer effective. Statistics prove, however, that churches that use a vocational evangelist and hold revival services at least once a year, baptize more people per resident member than churches that do not. In other words, revivals increase the evangelistic fervor of the individual church member and produce a higher number of conversions, baptisms, and disciples for Christ. This is because revival brings the individual Christian closer to Christ, and when a Christian is close to Christ, he or she will become missionary and evangelistic!

Another reason churches do not have a series of revival services is the work involved. Laziness keeps many churches from genuine revival. Preparing for and carrying out an effective revival meeting requires time, money and energy. Some churches are just not willing to pay the price for revival.

An additional reason churches fail to participate in revival services is due to a crowded schedule. Revivals take time – time during the meeting and even more time prior to the meeting preparing for the revival services to be effective.

The purpose of this short booklet is to help pastors and church leaders know that there is a simple and effective way to prepare for and lead the local church family to experience a *real personal and corporate revival*. There is no easy way to experience real revival without sacrifice, commitment and full surrender to the Lord, but there are steps that we can follow to place ourselves in a position and atmosphere for God to move in our lives.

Definition of Revival

I'm often asked to define the word "revival." I do not define revival as merely a series of worship services, nor can revival be identified as a purely emotional, spiritual experience.

Revival is a renewed, radical commitment to Jesus Christ empowered by the Holy Spirit. True revival will result in dynamic evangelism, conversions, worship, purity, joy, fellowship, obedience, peace, fulfillment, and devotion in the life of the believer. ***Revival seldom occurs in the life of a Christian without a deliberate confrontation.*** This confrontation has most often been associated with specific worship times set aside for renewal – these times have traditionally been called revival services.

Is Revival Biblical?

Psalm 80:18 states, “Revive us, and we will call on your name. Restore us, O Lord God Almighty; make your face shine upon us, that we may be saved.” The Old Testament songwriter prayed for revival to occur. Psalm 85:6 reads, “Will you not revive us again, that your people may rejoice in you?” We read in Isaiah 57:15, “For thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy; I will dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones.” God promised to “revive the spirit” and to “revive the heart.” It is plain to see that it is God’s desire to revive his people, and it ought to be the burden of God’s people to be revived.

We cannot program revival, however, we can lace ourselves in the position for God to do the work he desires to do in and through us. In Habakkuk 3:2 we find these words, “O Lord, I have heard thy speech, and was afraid: O Lord, revive thy work in the midst of the years, in the midst of the years make known, in wrath remember mercy.” Here we see the request and prayer for God to reveal the power and fame of his work done in the past. When we look today at the church and our ability to affect our society, we realize we do not have the power of those who came before us. The men and women of the previous era had a power given to them by God – a power that can be referred to as *REVIVAL POWER*. We need to pray for the Lord to renew his deeds in our day that we may stand in awe as we see him do in our time what he has done in times gone by. We need genuine revival.

Step 1 Toward Revival REALIZE

In order for revival to take place in the local church, or in the life of an individual Christian, one must *realize the need for revival*. Most ministers and lay people point to 2 Chronicles 7:14 when describing the requirements for revival to take place. The text states, “If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves and pray and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways, then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sins, and will heal their land.” Too few of us take time to study the context of this passage. In order to understand 2 Chronicles 7:14, we must read carefully 2 Chronicles 7:13, which states, “If I shut up heaven that there be no rain, or if I command the locusts to devour the land, or if I send pestilence among my people.” In other words, God told his people that they could not pray the pray of 2 Chronicles 7:14 until they understood that the problems they were having were a direct result of their spiritual rebellion. This means that we must realize the real need for revival in our lives and our churches before we can offer the prayer of 2 Chronicles 7:14.

So, we must ask the question, “Is the need for revival present in our lives and churches right now?” Observe the stagnant church in a sinful society. Examine the growth of cults and false religions in our day. Survey the acceptance of gambling and vulgarity among people. Look at the apathy among our church members even in the face

of fact that Georgia has doubled in population in recent years, but our baptism rate is essentially the same as it was 30 years ago. Yes! The need for revival is present right now. Child molestation, the breakdown of the home, the growth of gangs in our communities, the violence in our schools and a host of other problems point to the fact that we need revival now!

In addition look at the research on church growth in recent days. Church growth in the United States is as follows:

- 85% of America's churches are losing members;
- 14% are growing, but only by transfer of members from one church to another; and only
- 1% are growing through the conversion of lost people to a saving knowledge of Christ.

In other words, we are losing this generation each day that passes. Yes, we need revival now!

Not only must we realize the need for revival, but we must ***realize the source for revival***. In 2 Chronicles 7:14, the Lord told us that the HE is the source of revival. He stated it this way, "Then I will hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and heal their land." The source of revival is God, Himself! We cannot make revival happen, but we can turn to the one who desires to revive us, stir us and fan into a flame the embers of our souls. God is waiting for us to turn to him and is ready to move when we do.

We must also ***realize the potential for revival***. Many people do not plan revival services effectively because they do not know the potential for dramatic change when revival comes. What will happen if real revival occurs in the individual Christian or in the local congregation? God will bless us in several ways. First, there will be new unity among the church members. Church divisions will evaporate. Barriers to fellowship will disappear. Old grudges will be laid aside.

Also, there will be a renewed interest in missions. Revival brings us close to God's heart and God's will. It is not God's desire that anyone perish. Revival increases our interest and participation in missions through praying, giving and going to places where the people need Jesus.

Furthermore, revival will bring social transformation. The habits of people change when they experience genuine revival. Unholy practice will be confessed, forgiven and forsaken. The books people read, the movies they watch, the language they use, etc, will change when real revival comes.

In addition, church growth occurs when real revival takes place. Believers share their faith with lost friends, invite unchurched people to church, have a brighter spirit which draws people into the kingdom, are more accepting of strangers and begin to display the heart of Christ for the lost. No church growth plan ever devised will do more for a church than a heaven-sent revival!

Joy is another result of revival. The Bible speaks of "joy unspeakable and full of glory." That is exactly the kind of joy the New Testament Church had at Pentecost. We can have that same joy when we are fully surrendered to the Lord and fully filled with his Spirit.

When revival comes, families will be reunited, the lost will be saved, young people will surrender to full time Christian service, and a host of other amazing things

will occur. But, there are no shortcuts to revival. We will not experience revival until we know just how badly we need for God to revive us!

Step 2 Toward Revival PRIORITIZE

One mistake that many people make when thinking about revival is to think that a revival can be planned in just a few weeks. Actually, in order to prepare effectively for revival, we need to prioritize several areas of our church ministries far in advance of the actual revival services.

First, we must *prioritize the time*. You must choose a time for the meeting well in advance so that people in the church can schedule their lives appropriately. People are very busy and often have personal, family or business plans several weeks or months in advance. We must plan our revivals far enough ahead to give our church members time to place in on their calendar as a priority. This helps the pastor to get the church leaders onboard in the commitment process very early in the process of planning and praying about a revival effort, including the requirement for participation in pre-revival tasks that must be accomplished.

Prioritize the time by clearing the church calendar of all activities which might conflict or compete with the revival effort. Check your revival calendar against the local school calendar, holiday calendar, your denominational calendar and other calendars that could sabotage your revival effort. A revival should be planned at least 6 months in advance and a year is even better. Some churches plan revivals two years or more in advance and that is not a bad idea; however, those who plan that far ahead need to be flexible and ready for Holy Spirit to guide them in new ways as they get within one year of the event.

There are always some who believe something that is truly spiritual must be spontaneous. I would remind you that God had a plan for your salvation before the foundation of the world. If God could plan something as significant as your salvation that far in advance, it certainly is not unspiritual for you to think of planning a revival a year in advance! In fact, God is not a God of disorder. Planning is part of God's nature and should mark our ministries as well.

Secondly, we must *prioritize the evangelist*. Who is going to preach the revival? The question should only be answered after much prayer and deliberation. One should not choose an evangelist for a revival merely because he is someone you went to seminary with or is a friend in the ministry. The evangelist who will preach your revival should be someone chosen by the Holy Spirit. I would encourage you to consider using a vocational evangelist for your meeting. Why? The Scriptures clearly teach that some have been called to be evangelists. We should use those called to be an evangelist the same way a church calls someone to lead the church who has been called to serve as a pastor. Keith Fordham, a Georgia Baptist vocational evangelist, has been preaching revivals for over 30 years. He has kept accurate records of his meetings and reports that 98.5% of the time he has conversions in his revival services. I would expect that his experience would be true of many vocational evangelists. So, using a vocational evangelist can be a very positive thing for the pastor and the church since the vocational evangelist has been called by God for the purpose of preaching evangelistic revival

meetings. An evangelist cannot create a revival in your church, but he can make a great difference in the success or failure of the meeting.

Next, ***prioritize the calendar***. This means that the pastor and leadership in the church must look out into the future and carefully select dates for all the events surrounding the revival event. This is very similar to prioritizing the time, but differs in the sense that you must get very specific about all planning dates. These dates must be conveyed to the church leadership and church family early and often. It is very important that people know the dates of the revival very early so they can plan vacation, business and family events around those dates. Also, the church calendar must be cleared of all activities that might hinder the revival preparation and revival services. It may be necessary to cancel some ongoing church activities in order to place a priority on revival.

You must ***prioritize the budget***. Many churches do not have any monies budgeted for evangelism, and most do not plan any budget specifically for revival services. If you expect God to move in revival, plan to spend some money in preparing, promoting and carrying out the revival effort. Sit down with stewardship leaders and plan a budget for your revival services at least a year in advance of the event. Take special care in planning for the evangelist. Most evangelists expect the pastor to receive a love offering in every service that is specifically for the evangelist. This practice is not designed to enrich the evangelist, but is necessary for him to continue his ministry. Most vocational evangelists have no other income than that which is received through gifts from the churches where they preach. Their housing, health costs, life insurance, office funds and general salary come from those gifts. Many can barely survive on the income they receive. There are those who do very well financially, but we must remember that a workman is worthy of his hire. In addition, money should be designated in the budget to pay the travel, housing and meal expenses of the evangelist who preaches your revival. That money should not be taken from the love offering given during the revival services. Some pastors fear that large love offerings will result in a reduced offering to the church budget before and/or after the revival. I pastored for over 30 years and I never once had a love offering to an evangelist reduce the giving to my church; in fact, I believe urging people to give a gift of love for God's evangelist actually increases the giving to the church in the weeks that follow a revival.

Prioritize your leadership. I cannot emphasize too strongly how important this step is in the process of planning for an effective revival. Meet with the deacons as soon as you have a sense that revival services should be conducted and you when you have a specific time in mind. Share your heart with these men. Let them know of your sincere prayer for revival, the time you think the meeting should be held and perhaps even the evangelist you believe you preach the meeting. You are not asking for permission to have a meeting, you are sharing with the deacons that you need them to make a commitment with you to pray for the meeting, to mark their calendars appropriately and for them to put heart and soul into the effort. You may ask every deacon to consider signing a commitment card stating in effect a dedication to be at every service of the revival including the services on the Sunday after the revival (You will read later why the service after the revival is over is very important!).

Also, meet with all you Sunday School teachers and share you vision for revival with them. Ask them to mark their calendars so they can be present at every service! The teachers can be asked to sign a revival commitment card. The card states that the signer

will pray for the revival regularly, will attend all the services and will be at the services on the Sunday after the revival has ended. Meet with the choir, age group leaders and others in leadership and seek the same type of commitment. Ask all of your leaders to be open to taking responsibility on a revival team to help make the effort successful.

Many pastors complain that leaders don't attend all revival services and that many of them don't want to help with the effort. However, often this is true because they leaders were not informed of the meeting well in advance. Also, they did not hear the pastor pour out his heart concerning the need for revival. Lastly, they were not called upon in advance to assist in the actual preparation for the revival.

If you prioritize as you should, you will set aside a time for the revival 6 months to 1 ½ years before the actual meeting. Also, you will select an evangelist, clear the calendar, form a budget and gather commitments from you church leadership well in advance of the actual meeting. If you fail to prioritize, you have automatically planned to marginalize your revival effort.

Step 3 Toward Revival **AGONIZE**

We must agonize in prayer if we would experience real revival! In 2 Chronicles 7:14 we are clearly told to humble ourselves and pray! To pray does mean to merely utter words. It does not mean to state repetitious phrases. To pray means to seek God. That is why God included the statement, "and seek my face," when the passage was inspired. We are to draw up close to the Lord as we pray. Revival, in part, is getting close the Lord!

There is a Psalm to help us understand this process. In Psalm 13 David revealed a problem he was facing and a process he followed to overcome that problem. In Psalm 13:1 David prayed, "How long, O' Lord? Will you forget me forever? How long will you hide your face from me?" David is crying out to God asking how long the Lord will leave him in his current state. David repeats the phrase "how long" several times. If you look at this in the New King James Version, you will find him repeating the phrase "how long" no less than four times in two verses. In essence, David is crying out to God to ask how God is going to meet his need. Why you come to the end of this Psalm, you discover David giving praise to God for the answer. For example, in the final verse David states these words, "I will sing to the Lord, because he has dealt bountifully with me." We find that David got his answer. It is as if David had gone from the **how** of difficulty to the **now** of delight. Hoe did he do that! The answer is in the **bow** of prayer. He bowed down before the Lord and sought God with all his heart, and the Lord heard him and answered him! David bowed down and sought the Lord sincerely. That is what we must do if we expect to experience revival!

Prayer is essential for revival to occur. The pastor will need to select a prayer leader who can help formulate a prayer effort leading up to the revival. Prayer teams should be formed with 3 church members on each team. One person on each team should be prayer leader to ensure that the group stays in contact with each other and that they meet weekly for special revival prayer weeks prior to the revival services. The prayer teams should pray for personal revival in their own lives. Also, they should pray for the evangelist who will preach, for the music leader, the pastor, staff and all the revival teams that are working toward the revival event. They should pray for lost and unchurched

people by name. Most importantly, prayer teams should spend time before God seeking HIM above all else and asking God to have his way in their lives.

Other prayer efforts can be helpful. A prayer room can be established for revival prayer. Members are to be encouraged to go by that room and spend some time in prayer for the revival. Cottage prayer meetings can be held in the homes of church leaders a couple weeks prior to the revival. Personal prayer cards are a wonderful tool to be distributed to the members well in advance of the meeting to help them remember to pray for the revival – especially for personal revival.

Prayer is necessary for us to be open to all that God wants to do in our lives, families, church and community. Remember, only God can send revival. It is incumbent, therefore, that we call upon him and acknowledge our dependence upon him. Praying properly for revival is simply admitting that without him we can do nothing.

Step 4 Toward Revival ORGANIZE

God is not a God of disorder! Just as he organized the universe, we must organize ministry. Some people who speak despairingly of organization do not understand that God has organized all he has ever done. Consider your body. Every part of your body is organized to work properly. If you were not organized biologically, you might have an arm growing on top of your head. Your arms are where they are supposed to be because God organized your arms that way.

The universe is organized. The Bible states that summer, winter, spring and fall will continue till the end of time; the seasons are organized. God organized things so that plowing, planting, sowing and reaping can take place. Planning leads to order and productivity.

In the same manner we must organize spiritual work under the direction of this same God. We must properly plan and deliberately organize revival in order to produce the best results possible. To organize properly means that we must create teams to assist in various portions of the preparatory work involved in a revival effort. Revival teams accomplish the goal of maximizing the involvement of as many members as possible. The key to each team is to be sure a reliable, prayerful, spiritual person leads the team. Also, we must organize these teams around themes.

Team One – Prayer Team

A prayer team assists the pastor and church in organizing for prayer far in advance of the revival services. The prayer team requires a leader and several members who will encourage the church family to pray prior to the revival.

Team Two – Prospect/Attendance Team

The Prospect/Attendance Team must also have a leader and several church members who will encourage the church family to recognize prospects and build attendance for the revival services. There are several ways to find prospects. One way is for a community survey to be done weeks prior to the revival. Survey cards are available through our Evangelism Office and through the North American Mission Board. Community surveys assist in locating unsaved and/or unchurched people. These

prospects should be invited and revisited prior to the revival event. Sunday School classes should be given names from the survey for follow up. The Prospect/Attendance Team should work with the Sunday School teachers to urge 100% attendance at the revival services. Furthermore, this team can work with the pastor to have a “Who Do” day in the church. On this day, the members receive “Who Do” cards with blank spaces. The members are asked, “Who do you now that needs Christ and/or a church where they can join?” The cards are collected and used for prayer and outreach. The team may discover or create other ideas for reaching prospects.

Ushers Greeters/Parking Team

One neglected area of church life is greeting people who come to our services. Ushers who greet people in parking lot and at the church doors are important. These greeters make the guest feel welcome and at home in our churches. Too often, we speak only to those people we know when we are in church. Visitors can feel left out and actually leave the service before it begins. It is critical that the Ushers/Greeters Team consist of people who understand what it means to greet people. They must turn their attention to visitors and guests rather than just speaking to the members they already know. There are materials available in various places that can be used to train and inform Ushers and Greeters. This team must study and review such material, picking out the best helps they can find in order to be as effective as possible.

Childcare/Pre-School

Many people who come to the revival services will be uneasy about leaving their children in a childcare area. The news concerning child molestation in churches is overblown, but it has frightened parents of small children. Staff your childcare area with adults. Never have one adult alone with small children. Do background checks on all childcare workers. Post a small sign near the entrance to childcare areas stating that all childcare workers have submitted to background checks for the purpose of assuring parents that it is safe to leave your child in our care. Do not staff your childcare area with teenagers. It may be appropriate to have a couple teenagers in childcare but they must be accompanied at all times by adults. Giving peace of mind to parents who visit your church can help those parents concentrate on the message from God during the service.

Publicity Team

No one has ever attended a revival he or she did not know was taking place. You must publicize your event. The publicity team is responsible for establishing ways for promoting the fact that the revival is occurring. This will involve many different activities. The publicity team must be prepared to work many weeks in advance to make sure the church knows the revival is approaching and that people in the community are aware that the revival is open to everyone. Bulletin boards, leaflets, prayer tents for use in homes, church classrooms, announcements in the pulpit, dramas in worship, radio/television ads and many other tools may be used to publicize a revival event. The Publicity Team must seek to discover every way possible to make it known that the revival is occurring.

Stewardship Team

The Stewardship Team will work with the pastor and other leaders to make sure the offerings are taken in a proper manner. The funds received must be cared for and counted appropriately. The stewardship team may work with the pastor or other leaders during the revival event. This group can ensure that all love offering funds are properly designated and passed on to the evangelist.

Counseling Team

The Counseling Team must not be underestimated in importance. The pastor and/or leaders of the church must train counselors to be prepared to share with those who make decisions during the revival services. It is important that the pastor does not become tied up at the altar talking with one person several minutes during the invitation. Other people may be contemplating decisions for the Lord, but will not come forward if the pastor is busy with someone else. They may, in fact, wait for the pastor to end the conversation with someone who is standing with him during the invitation, and in those intervening moments allow the influence of the Holy Spirit to pass by them. When someone comes forward, it is important for the pastor to have a trained counselor nearby who can immediately take that person and be of assistance in counseling that individual. The pastor is ready, then, to receive another person who is prompted by the Holy Spirit to make a decision during the invitation. A lot of material is available to assist the pastor and leaders in counselor training. This team should research that material and meet with the pastor to decide which material is best for use in the revival services.

Youth Team

Organize a Youth Team to work on planning activities for young people before and during the revival services. A special youth night must be planned by the pastor and visiting evangelist. It is best if the youth event occurs before the evening service and in that meeting the evangelist can share a brief but strong appeal for young people to come to Christ. Those who make decisions in the pre-meeting can come forward in the regular evening revival service to make their decisions public. Also, the youth event must be promoted only to youth and their leaders. It is not best to advertise to the entire church that a particular night of the revival is youth night; to do so can persuade some adults that the service is only for youth. The regular evening revival service should not be designed specifically for youth in order to reach a larger audience.

Children's Team

Organize a Children's Team to work on planning activities for children before and during the revival services. A children's night must be planned by the pastor and visiting evangelist. It is best if the children's event occurs before the evening service and in that meeting the evangelist can share a brief but strong appeal for older children to come to Christ. Those who make decisions in the pre-meeting can come forward in the regular evening revival service to make their decisions public. It is important, however, for children to have the approval and permission of their parents before being urged to come forward in a public worship service. Also, the children's event must be promoted only to youth and their leaders. It is not best to advertise to the entire church that a particular night of the revival is children's night; to do so can persuade some adults that the service

is only for children. The regular evening revival service should not be designed specifically for children in order to reach a larger audience.

Follow Up Team

The follow up team is critical to the complete success of the revival effort. The follow up team is responsible for making follow up visits with all individuals who make a public commitment during the revival services. This is done to ensure that all those who make commitments receive counsel and assistance in following through with their commitments. It is important for the pastor to train the follow up team in order to help the team members know how to assist each person visited with materials and advice. It is critical that no one who makes a commitment to the Lord “slip through the cracks.”

Step 5 Toward Revival PUBLICIZE

The revival effort must be effectively publicized to the church membership and the community. Members in the church should be informed about the revival well in advance. It is not too early to mention the revival 3 months prior to the meeting. The intensity of publicity within the church should be escalated as each week passes. Six weeks prior to the revival every member of the church should be able to tell you the date, theme and purpose of the upcoming revival. Publicity outside the church must begin within 6 weeks of the revival services. Use free radio spots and cable TV time to advertise the revival. Purchase spots on cable TV since those ads are much cheaper and can be bought in blocks of advertising that is scattered across a wide spectrum of programs and times. Place posters in the church and in stores throughout the community. Visit communities and leave leaflets attached to doors or hand them to people in yards or out for a walk. Use the church bulletin, dramas in worship, announcements in meetings, letters to the membership and other means of informing the members about the meeting. In essence, use every available means at your disposal to get the word out concerning the revival. Think of innovative ways to publicize the revival.

Step 6 Toward Revival EVANGELIZE

Some people point out that revivals are really for God’s people. This is true; however, when a church is revived, that church will be evangelistic! Often during revival events, evangelism is reinvigorated among God’s people. As a church prepares for revival, they often become burdened for the unchurched and unsaved. To experience the supernatural nature of revival, a church family must be prepared to evangelize before and during the revival.

There are several ways that a church can have a new evangelistic zeal with the congregation prior to and during the revival effort. During revival preparation, believers should become more conscious of the fact that lost people are all around them, and these believers should begin to experience conviction about witnessing to these people as well. For this reason, the pastor or designated staff person should train members in the task of sharing their faith. Many tools are available to assist in this task. One such tool is 59

Minute Evangelism Training (59MET). Written by Dr. David Mills, Consultant with the Evangelism Ministries Office of the Georgia Baptist Convention, this approach is based on the witnessing style of Jesus. Certainly there is a place for witness training that encompasses 8 weeks or 16 weeks, or even longer periods of time. But, we must also recognize that witnessing is often *caught* as well as *taught*. A person who is revived can become captivated with the gospel and its power to bring people to faith in Christ. Such people may be dissuaded by long, detail witness training. The woman who met Jesus at the well in Sychar is a perfect example. She met Jesus, received the Living Water of eternal life and immediately went back to her town and told people about Jesus. The citizens of the town came out to the well to meet Jesus. She became an immediate evangelist. If someone had told her she could not witness till she had 4 months of training, she might never have shared her faith! People are trained using *59MET* learn how to witness in less than one hour. This is an excellent tool to renew training for those who have already had witness training, or to train first time witnesses who are excited and ready to share their faith.

Visitation should take place at least 3 or 4 times prior to the revival. As a church prepares for revival, revival often breaks out in advance of the actual services. Some churches see several people saved before the revival week actually arrives.

Another tool that can be used prior to revival, in order to reach unchurched and lost people, is *Clean Sweep*. This ministry is designed to reach people who are Sunday School members but have never joined the church. In Luke 15, Jesus tells about the woman who had 10 coins but lost one IN THE HOUSE. That lost coin represents those who are in the church but not in the kingdom. There are a host of people in our churches who may have their name on a Sunday School roll but have never joined the church. *Clean Sweep* requires 4 weeks of preparation time and 1 Saturday of visitation. The pastor or someone he assigns must go through the records of the church to discover the names and addresses of all those who are Sunday School members but not church members. The names and addresses of those discovered must be placed on visitation forms and attached to maps showing the direction to those homes. The pastor must ask the church members to attend the a Saturday morning visitation the day before the revival begins on Sunday. The meeting should start around 8:00 AM with a light breakfast and training. The training consists of the pastor teaching the members how to share with those they visit. Basically, each person visiting should go to the home designated, share with the person being visited that the church records show that he or she is not a member, and ask if there is some reason why that person has not joined the church. Answers will center on 3 areas. First, the person may fear baptism by immersion. Second, the person may not know how to join the church. Third, the person may have simply never been asked to join. Of course, in some cases, the person may not be saved. The visitor must be trained in how to deal with each answer in loving but straightforward way. In the end, the visitor should ask the non-member if he or she would be willing to join the church on Sunday. The visitor should offer to sit with the non-member in church and walk with him or her to the altar on Sunday. Evangelist Keith Fordham, who has used this approach in the past, states that 1 out of 3 people you visit on that Saturday before the revival will join on Sunday morning!

Statistics prove that a church experiencing at least one conversion during a revival increases the baptism statistics for the remainder of the year. It is important to emphasize evangelism before, during and after the revival.

Step 7 Toward Revival MAXIMIZE

The Sunday after the revival is just as important as the Sunday before the revival begins. Churches often have a let down on the Sunday after the revival. This creates a negative atmosphere and can deflate the results of the revival effort. The Bible clearly tells us that God saves the best for last, and we should do that in revival.

The Sunday after revival should be HIGH ATTENDANCE DAY. It is not wise to make the Sunday before revival a promotional day for attendance. Create an atmosphere that leads to a pinnacle at the end of the event rather than starting on a mountain top and sliding down hill all week.

All leaders should be asked to make a commitment to attend all services on the day the revival begins, all services during the revival, and the morning and evening services on the Sunday after the revival is over. This alone builds attendance and faithfulness. Commitment Cards, as mentioned earlier in this material, should be used to gain a deep and sincere commitment from the deacons, choir members, Sunday School teachers, women's leaders, men's leaders, etc.

On the Sunday after the revival, the choir should sing one of the most uplifting songs in their repertoire. The pastor should prepare a sermon that is specifically designed on a revival level. Those people who have been visited by the follow up team on Thursday, Friday and Saturday following the revival should be ready to come forward make public commitments to Christ and/or His church.

The Sunday night after revival should be billed as a celebration of God's blessings. Warm music should be sung. Two or three people who made commitments during the revival should be asked to speak. These testimonies should not be more than 3 or 4 minutes each, and should be prepared by those speaking in advance of the service. Finally, the church should retreat to the fellowship hall, or an appropriate place, for refreshments and fellowship. This is a great time for new Christians and new members to be greeted and welcomed into the family.

The Sunday after the revival should be a day of MAXIMUM potential, harvest and celebration!

CONCLUSION

Revival cannot be created by man, but we can prepare for God's blessings, pray for God's blessings and open our hearts to God's blessings that are showered on his people during revival times. The seven steps shared in this simple booklet are not a secret to revival, but are shared so that we all might place ourselves in the best possible position for God to move mightily in our lives and our churches. We offer assistance in revival preparation in other ways and through other tools, so feel free to contact us as you pray about revival in your local church. It is our prayer that your church and you as an individual will experience genuine revival in these days!