

Firestorm of the Lord

The History of and Prospects for Revival in the Church and the World

Stuart Piggin

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Researching the history of Australian evangelicalism and the history of revival in Australia has been the focus of Piggin's contribution in historiography for many years. In this latest work the title *Firestorm of the Lord* demonstrates the author's thesis that Jesus is the focus in revival, not the Holy Spirit and not revival as an end in itself. 'The Spirit exalts Jesus and the doctrines of his saving grace' (p 3). He refers consistently with many helpful references to the writings and ministries of Jonathan Edwards, George Whitfield, Charles Finney, Martyn Lloyd-Jones, James Packer and Billy Graham. But there is only one main reference to Asahel Nettleton (p 51) and none to Charles H Spurgeon.

Piggin sets the direction of his work in the first chapter, where he presents his own definition of revival, based on his understanding of its cause (p 11).

Revival is a sovereign work of God the Father, consisting of a powerful intensification by Jesus of the Holy Spirit's normal activity of testifying to the Saviour, accentuating the doctrines of grace, and convicting, converting, regenerating, sanctifying and empowering large numbers of people at the same time, and is therefore a community experience.

He goes on to explain that 'genuine revival cannot be worked up from below. It must come down from above', and illustrates this with reference to a mission at the small South Australian town of Wudinna during 1969 (p 13). He adds that 'revivals are always associated with the preaching of the gospel, which is the message of the cross' (p 17). This is surely true with every genuine work of God, for the preaching and teaching at Wudinna was centred on the cross and forgiveness, not on revival. On the same page, Piggin writes, 'A revival is an anticipation of the second coming'. Within word limits this truth could have been expanded, for the coming of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost and any description of revival is only complete when the Eschaton is seen as the end view of Pentecost.

Revival in the Old and New Testaments is introduced in the second chapter with some Biblical studies and brief reference to Jonathan Edwards as the theologian of revival. Piggin is correct when he writes that Edwards interpreted the Bible christologically, whereas some modern scholars 'tend to stress creation as more foundational than the new creation' (p 26). The next chapter again features Edwards in America, plus other revival happenings in Britain and

continental Europe during the eighteenth century. Included is reference to Australian Aboriginal Christians, who give testimony from more recent twentieth-century events and affirm in their story 'that it is Christ himself, rather than a phenomenon called revival, who is liberating them from a world which had been death to them' (p 52). Comments on a Sydney church teaching mission forty years ago, involving people whom Piggin knows personally, emphasises the same truth of folk at a prayer meeting coming to the Lord and asking him 'to reveal himself to them'. The Spirit brought conviction of sin, then came the reality of God's total forgiveness, and they sang without awareness of time until four thirty in the morning (pp 52, 53).

The last two centuries feature in chapter four and introduce Methodist revivals after Wesley. Piggin refers to the South Australian Methodist historian Arnold Hunt, who lists four characteristics that predisposed Methodism in Australia to revival (p 65):

- they were a successful missionary organisation
- they had a message which they believed was pure gospel
- they were a spiritual rather than a bureaucratic or liturgical movement
- they were a warm fellowship in which laity as well as clergy were expected to evangelise.

Piggin adds that Methodist revivals generally originated from either regular services of worship or prayer meetings. In contrast, the priority of believing prayer and fasting is seldom found in churches of the twenty-first century (p 66). History shows that during these nineteenth and twentieth centuries a significant number of international evangelists visited English-speaking countries including Australia. The showers of blessing fell and evangelical institutions were established, but techniques, pragmatism and dependence 'in mechanical means of procuring converts' became the norm. 'Christians adjusted to the absence of God's power...and the study of the Puritans and of revivals fell out of the curriculum of theological colleges' (p 69). The chapter concludes with the exciting and sometimes neglected account of revivals among Indigenous peoples in Elcho Island (Galiwin'ku) and Arnhem Land during the last twenty-five years (p 77-80).

The charismatic movement with frequent unnecessary tension between the gifts and the fruit of the Spirit, the Toronto Blessing and the teaching of Martyn Lloyd-Jones form much of Piggin's writing in chapter five. He warns of the danger when emphases on gifts sidetrack us and do not lead to Jesus, and of those who desire the power of the Spirit apart from the cross of Christ (p 92).

Lloyd-Jones and his experience and teaching on the Holy Spirit is examined in chapter six, along with helpful references to Wesley, Finney, Moody, Graham and the Aboriginal revival in the Western Australia areas of Warburton and Meekatharra during the 1980s. Piggin then adds his own testimony of the Spirit that came suddenly and without warning. Most helpful is the advice given him following that experience of God's visitation, that he do nothing about trying to work out what happened but rest in what happened and know that the Father has forgiven him and loves him (p 107).

The next chapter will raise eyebrows in some quarters, including evangelical Anglicans and nonconformists. Revival and obstacles to revival in Anglican and Catholic churches is the theme, and Piggin identifies the dangers of setting boundaries to God's work, the fear of not being accepted by one's religious club, and the blockages that can be erected by formalism, clericalism, sacramentalism and tradition. Every church and denomination has its own political, cultural and

theological boundaries, and if Piggin's aim is to cause his readers to examine their own personal obstacles to revival, he will hopefully succeed.

Edwards, Finney and Lloyd-Jones feature in the eighth section, concerning God's sovereignty and human responsibility in revival. The two areas are not mutually exclusive, so while we cannot initiate any work for God, we are not to remain static. His word, the word of the cross, contains the power for us to respond.

The last four chapters spotlight preaching, praying, paying and planning for revival. The first of these emphasises again the centrality of the cross in revival (p 148). Piggin quotes from a letter by former CMS missionary in Pakistan and Bible college principal, Geoffrey Bingham: 'My thinking is not in terms of revival, but in the power of the gospel proclaimed in the power of the Spirit' (p 150). Therefore 'preaching for revival' should focus on the cross, not on revival. 'The focus of the gospel is the cross; evangelicals have always been crucicentric (cross-centred). In the cross is power and wisdom and truth and reality' (p 160).

In the eleventh chapter, entitled 'Paying for Revival' (p 176), and in reference to the 1959 Billy Graham Crusade in Melbourne (p 171), the well-known 2 Chronicles 7:14 is used to illustrate the cost of revival. This is God's provision addressed to Solomon and examination of its context and the calamities that would descend on Israel and the temple if they turned from the Lord—and they did.

The twelve chapters conclude with an Addendum, addressed to what the reader can do. Then follows an Epilogue, suggesting what the next great awakening will look like. An extensive Bibliography plus Author, Scripture and Subject Indexes complete an easy-to-read, stimulating volume from an author obviously longing for revival in our land. The book is prescriptive in many areas, but I recommend it as a significant spur for all believers 'to recover an indomitable conviction about the sufficiency and efficiency of Scripture alone' (p 216).

Firestorm of the Lord book. Read reviews from world's largest community for readers. For far too many Christians today, revival is a distant and dusty ph... Goodreads helps you keep track of books you want to read. Start by marking Firestorm of the Lord: The History of and Prospects for Revival in the Church and the World as Want to Read: Want to Read saving... Want to Read. The Great Fire of London was a major conflagration that swept through the central parts of London from Sunday, 2 September to Thursday, 6 September 1666. The fire gutted the medieval City of London inside the old Roman city wall. It threatened but did not reach the City of Westminster (today's West End), Charles II's Palace of Whitehall, or most of the suburban slums. It destroyed 13,200 houses, 87 parish churches, St Paul's Cathedral, and most of the buildings of the City authorities. It is estimated [PVE][BHR][Lord Ravenscrest] Legacy of the Ravenscrest. You cannot stack anymore Legacy of the Ravenscrest on Black Rook Hold. March 10, 2020. meanwhile the second boss room on the first pack of Helblaze Imp there is like a mob that will have to be a simple animation but on firestorm it's an real add, it remains stuck behind the wall and this causes a bug fight. LinkedID : A2663D11CE8D572188D19393AE86B107C61E9261. fs : retail