

Home Group Discussion Questions

In your home groups this week – I'm asking you to take a little different direction. I'd like you to watch a 20 minute video on the transformation of a major urban center through the united prayer efforts of thousands of Christians in that city....then I'd like you to talk about the implications of what you saw and what our text calls us to face. Have a great discussion!

History (Making it Personal)

1. In reflecting on the video – what do you think it would take for our churches today to hunger for this kind of prayer and unity? Why do we not cry out to God like this? Does it take a “crash” before we wake up?
2. Have you ever been part of what you would call a “revival?” Describe what you saw and experienced and what the long-term outcome of that revival was?
3. Why do you think that Canada has never known a massive renewal or revival that has swept across the nation? What would it take for us to see revival fires blaze in the southern interior? Do we even desire it?

Digging Deeper (Looking to the Bible)

4. Read Revelation 3:1-6
5. Jesus is the one who holds the churches and the one who sends the Spirit. Read Acts 1:8; Romans 8:5; Galatians 5:16-18 & I Thessalonians 5:19. Talk about the evidence that should be seen in our lives as we walk in the Spirit.
6. Reflect on the text in I Thessalonians 5:19 and talk about how we can put out the Spirit's fire....
7. Read 2 Chronicles 7:11-16 and reflect on all the conditions for revival that God places on His people. There are a lot of “ifs” in this text! Do we desire this?

Taking It Home (Application)

8. I want to encourage you to spend some extended time in prayer for renewal and revival to sweep through our region – knowing that it must begin with us. So first spend some time in confession and repentance for the things in our lives that have made us “sleepy” then cry out to God that He would send a new wave of His presence and power into our lives and into our churches.
9. Pray especially that the up-coming Missions Now week will be a great unifying event for all our evangelical churches as we gather together for several meetings from March 1-6. Pray that the unity we express there may fan into flame the fires of revival.

As we get further into our study of Revelation, particularly into the visions of chapters 4-19, we will be challenged in our understanding and interpretation. In looking at this book, there have been four major theories of interpretation. The following is a brief overview of each of these interpretive views. Google it!

The Historic Pre-millennial View

This is one of the oldest interpretive models and basically says that the book of Revelation relates to the various persecutions and hardships the people of God will face before the return of Christ. In His 2nd coming, Christ will destroy the power of the Anti-Christ and usher in a literal 1,000 year period of peaceful rule. At the end of this time, there will be the great white throne judgment, and the new heavens and new earth are ushered in.

The Amillennial View

This view is also a very old view, dating to the early centuries in the church, and has been the majority view throughout the course of church history. This view does not see a literal 1,000 year reign of Christ (thus its name!) but sees the millennium being fulfilled in a spiritual fashion through the ministry of the church as we seek to usher in God's kingdom here on earth. This view looks forward to the return of Christ, when all people will be raised from the dead, stand before the judgment seat, and the new heavens & earth are ushered in.

The Dispensational Pre-millennial View

This is the “youngest” of the interpretive views which has been popularized in the past 150 years. This view sees chapters 1-3 as dealing with the church age followed by the “rapture” or removal of the church from earth. Chapters 4-19 are seen as being written about the nation of Israel during the 7 year “tribulation.” This tribulation ends with a great battle at Armageddon when Christ returns with the raptured Church and establishes a literal 1,000 year reign. This “dispensation” ends with Satan's final rebellion & judgment, the great white throne judgment, and the ushering in of the new heavens and earth.

The Postmillennial View

This view is a “young” view as well – dating back 2-300 years. It held that through the preaching of the gospel the world would gradually be won to Christ. The millennium is fulfilled through the church and the preaching of the gospel. Righteousness and justice prevail and the great commission is fulfilled. After the world has been prepared in this way, Christ will return in glory.

(This “brief” is from Encountering the New Testament – Elwell & Yarbrough)

What we need to understand is that devout Christians have held all of these views and several more! What is tragic is when the return of Christ becomes such a controversy that godly people separate from one another. The important fact that ALL these views agree with is this – Jesus is coming again!