

Transforming Daily
“ . . . if My people who are called by My name . . . ”
2 Chronicles 7:14

This verse of Scripture is probably one of the most overused and miscontextualized verses in the Bible. Many evangelists and evangelistic ministers, including myself, have cited this verse almost as a mantra for the purpose of forcing the arrival of revival. It has been presented to the church in such a way as to guarantee revival and renewal if we would just simply take the message of this verse to heart and “pray it like we mean it.” But then what happens when revival isn’t experienced? The minister or evangelist tells us that we must not have been serious about our prayers, and nothing could be further from the truth.

There is no doubt that churches need revival, and it is consistent that where revival and renewals have occurred much prayer has been offered and perhaps instrumental in the process of the arrival of revival. However, God brings revival where, when and to whom He chooses. The bigger picture here is not just a season of prayer, commitment and dedication, but a lifetime lived with such devotion. The late Vance Havner used to say, “We wouldn’t need revival if people would just stay ‘vived.’”

If you read the whole context in which this single verse is placed (6:12-7:22), you will find that these words are God’s response to Solomon’s prayer of dedication for the new temple of God. So the comparison for contextual consideration is to ask, where is the temple of God today? The answer, according to 1 Corinthians 6:19, is that the believer’s body is the temple of God today. God indwells those of us who believe. Romans 12:1-2 informs us that our lives lived to the glory of God are a reasonable sacrifice.

The writer of 2 Chronicles wasn’t offering a recipe for revival. He was reminding the children of Israel of God’s covenant with them and doing so through King Solomon’s prayer. The prayer in chapter 6 was more of a prayer of restoration and confession. God’s response not only included physical blessing if the children of Israel would honor the prayer of King Solomon, but also included a curse of physical judgment if they didn’t (v.19-22).

Are you called by the name of Christ? Have you surrendered your life to God? Do your prayers reflect a life of devotion? How does your life reflect that your body is the temple of God? Does the life you now live as the temple of God require Him to say, “if My people who are called by my name?”