It happened nearly a hundred years ago, in a decrepit old Methodist church that was definitely on the wrong side of the tracks in the old industrial part of Los Angeles, near a tombstone shop, some stables and a lumber yard. Hundreds of people jammed the building and the street outside just to be touched by the Spirit of God. The press ridiculed such spiritual enthusiasm, but the negative publicity only inflamed people’s curiosity. Eventually, multiplied thousands from around the world would be forever changed by this revival that ran non-stop in day and night prayer meetings or over three years. Little could the subscribers of the Los Angeles Times have guessed that in years to come, historians would say that the Azusa Street revival gave birth to modern Pentecostalism and became the most significant revival of the twentieth century in terms of world evangelism.

Perhaps the most significant feature of the Azusa Street revival was that there were no “superstars.” Even the “pastor” of the church, William Seymour, spent most of his time on his knees with his head buried in the homemade pulpit. There was something major going on below the waterline of this revival – how different from today’s “renewal services”!

A prophecy was given during this revival, at some unknown point by some unknown person. Nearly a hundred years later, it sounds a warning for us in the Apostolic movement …

“In the last days three things will happen in the great Pentecostal Movement … there will be an overemphasis on power, rather than on righteousness; there will be an overemphasis on the gifts of the Spirit, rather than on the Lordship of Christ; there will be an overemphasis on praise, to a God they no longer pray to.”

WHAT DOES REVIVAL LOOK LIKE?

It is probably easier to tell you what revival DOESN'T look like …

It doesn't look like “business as usual” in our services and ministries. It doesn't look like the pride that values eloquence over anointing in the pulpit. It doesn't look like the self-righteousness that can critique everyone and everything else, while remaining unaware that the real spiritual problem is in the critic. It doesn't look like the selfishness that demands that every service, sermon, song and ministry be targeted to the whims of the saints instead of the needs of the lost. It doesn't look like the fear of man that keeps our witnessing and our worship so polite that it is powerless. It doesn't look like the lukewarmness that lets people attend church only when it suits their schedule and obey God only when it suits their lifestyle. Do we really want revival, or do we merely want more blessings to squander on ourselves?
Matthew 4:1-11  Then was Jesus led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil. [2] And when he had fasted forty days and forty nights, he was afterward an hunred. [3] And when the tempter came to him, he said, If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread. [4] But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God. [5] Then the devil taketh him up into the holy city, and setteth him on a pinnacle of the temple, [6] And saith unto him, If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down: for it is written, He shall give his angels charge concerning thee: and in their hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone. [7] Jesus said unto him, It is written again, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God. [8] Again, the devil taketh him up into an exceeding high mountain, and sheweth him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them; [9] And saith unto him, All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me. [10] Then saith Jesus unto him, Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve. [11] Then the devil leaveth him, and, behold, angels came and ministered unto him.

THE THREE TEMPTATIONS OF “FALSE REVIVAL” ... 

- Wasting the “bread” on fleshly hunger instead of eternal priorities (power rather than righteousness)
- Being careless in our walk and expecting God to bail us out (gifts of the Spirit rather than Lordship of Christ)
- Worshipping something else besides God in our secret place (praise to a God you no longer pray to)

Revival always breaks out when repentance is manifested. Repentance is not just sinners who are set in their ways making a change; it is saints who are set in their ways making a change!

Isaiah 57:15  For thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy; I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones.

2 Chronicles 7:14  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 sin, and will heal their land.

Habakkuk 3:2  O Lord, revive thy work in the midst of the years, in the midst of the years make known; in wrath remember mercy.