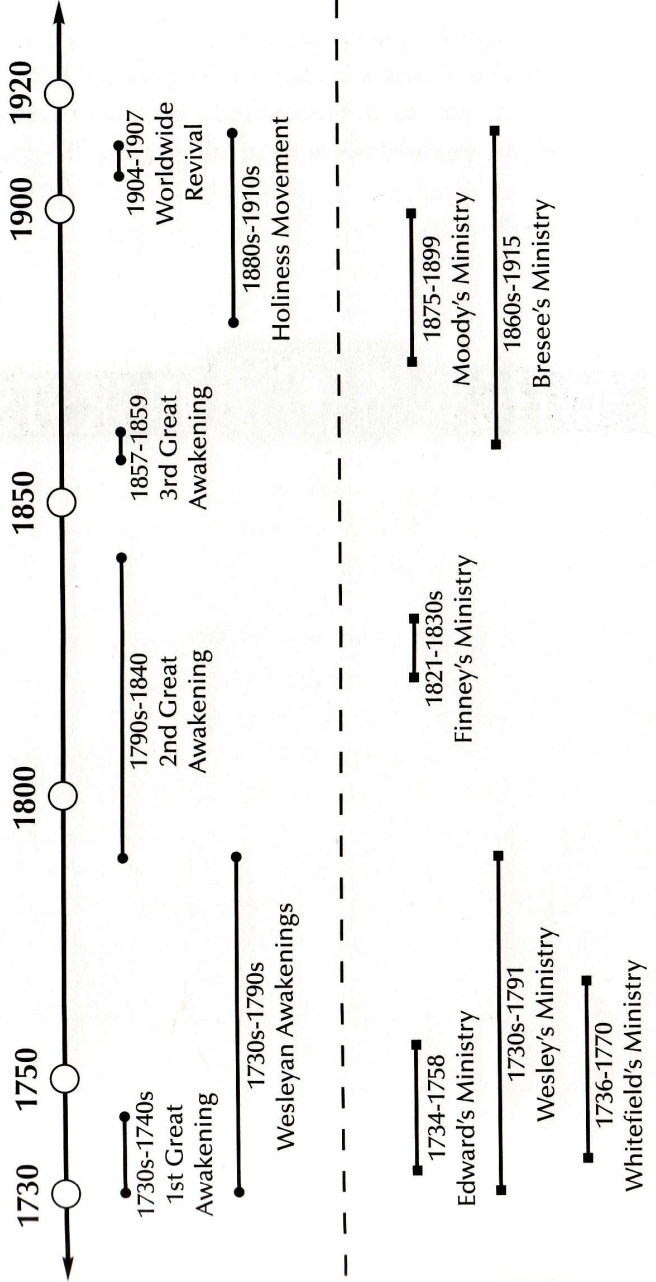


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TIMELINE OF MAJOR REVIVALS AND AWAKENINGS



INTRODUCTION

"EVERY SUNDAY MR. HECKER ran up and down the center aisle waving his hands and praising the Lord. He was filled with the Holy Spirit. The whole church was filled with the Holy Spirit. I can still hear him shouting 'Hallelujah!' He often took off his coat and threw it over the clock so no one could tell what time it was. He didn't want the service to end." Now crooked and wrinkled, Dorothy smiled at her childhood memory and nodded with approval. The service she talked about, the one Mr. Hecker didn't want to end, was the Sunday morning worship. Every week, I looked up at the clock—a different one from Mr. Hecker's time, generations before—but a clock just the same. Our services at the Alhambra Church of the Nazarene never ran overtime. I now wish they had.¹

The infilling of the Holy Spirit—let's go the whole way—the invasion of the Holy Spirit into a person's life or the life of a church congregation never happens just because we'd like it to. It happens because we hunger for God. And it happens because God chooses to graciously lavish himself on us. He does it in different ways at different times.

Does He still do it? Evangelist Elaine Pettit remembers an experience that happened in July 1994 at Lafayette Church of the Nazarene, in Lexington, Kentucky. The pastor wanted her to preach one more day than what she was scheduled, and she agreed.

During her personal prayers the next day, "deep sobs began to well up within" her as she sensed God's presence. Bill Bright describes a similar experience:

While I was seeking His guidance, something extraordinary happened. I distinctly sensed a sobbing in my spirit and, amazingly, I knew our Lord was weeping. I was startled at first. And although I did not know why He was weeping, I began to sob,

too. Then I sensed Him saying, "My people have forgotten one of the most important disciplines of the Christian life, the major key of revival." And I knew He meant fasting with prayer.² Scripture expresses this in Rom. 8:26: "In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groans that words cannot express."

Elaine believed that God was grieving over His Church and wanting her to remind His people that He is a holy God whose people must also be holy. Because they have lived lives of compromise and strayed from the narrow way, they must now humble themselves, pray, and repent.

That night the Holy Spirit ignited a revival. For the next 36 days and 42 services, many people testified to being saved, sanctified, and delivered. A large number were baptized, several testified to physical healings, and many were called to full-time ministry. Reconciliation occurred among the people, and some made restitution for wrongs as far back as 20 years.

Should we be amazed? Didn't God say, "If my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and heal their land" (2 Chron. 7:14)?

Elaine's experience is a preview of what God expects and what I hope will sweep churches across our nation. Will you read this book just for amusement or to pass the time? Or will you take it to heart and apply it? It could be a part of God changing your life and the life of your local church. What then is the best way to apply it?

QUALITATIVE MEASURING GAUGES

Lip service is the cheapest and easiest service in the world. Even God laments over the lip service of those who believe in Him: "These people come near to me with their mouth and honor me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me" (Isa. 29:13). Of

all the services the Christian Church has ever held, lip service has been the best attended. Every positive change the Church ever had was when people got out of the lip service and into the doing service. In which one do you spend most of your time?

To make positive changes and to know where we're going, we should clarify where we're starting from and where we genuinely want, and will pay the price, to go. To do that it helps to qualitatively measure the state of our spirituality.

Qualitative measures (such as assessing the spiritual health of a church) are by nature more difficult to assess than quantitative measures (such as counting how many people attend a church). The first parallel gauge below attempts to help you qualitatively assess the condition of your own spiritual life; the second, the spiritual state of your own local church. You may find them incomplete as they relate to you or your church specifically. If so, feel free to add assessment questions of your own.

The scores on each gauge are not meant to be added up. Assess yourself and your church on the gauges to find areas where you and your church are doing well and where you and your church could change or improve.

Personal Life

1. Would Jesus say that I am walking in holiness, with a pure heart of love toward Him?

My life is not as holy as it ought to be.		My love for Jesus keeps me from desiring to sin.
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2. Is my life of holiness characterized more by living according to rules or a relationship?

I live by obeying rules that God would have me follow.		I live by a relationship with Jesus, pleasing Him and doing His will.
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GLORY DAYS

The Holiness Movement

EVANGELIST LAWRENCE HICKS had preached for a week and had a good crowd but mediocre results at a Methodist church in the Cumberland Mountains. He tells the story of the surprising work of the Holy Spirit in that place. "On this Saturday night I preached, made an altar call, did all I was able to do as we sang three invitation songs through. Not one single person came forward. This being the closing service of the schedule, I prepared to dismiss the congregation."

Before he could do this, a man in the back of the sanctuary, who had been weeping and talking to his backslidden son, pleaded with Hicks, "Brother Hicks, please ask them to sing one more song." So they did. Then,

with the suddenness of lightning, at about midway through the first stanza, the "break" came. The young man started toward the altar. A rather large man seemed stricken in the middle aisle. With tears streaming down his cheeks he sat in the middle of the aisle vowing that he would never budge until he had salvation; meanwhile people trampled him underfoot as if oblivious to his presence.

In less than one minute the altar could hold no more seekers.

After these heart-stricken people had trampled on each other to reach the altar Saturday night, Hicks returned to his own church for Sunday morning services and agreed to come back one last