

A Look at the Asbury “Revival”

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Note from Kevin Lea: I have been repeatedly asked about my opinion of the so-called revival that took place recently at Asbury University in Wilmore, Kentucky (Asbury.edu). A friend recently forwarded to me the excellent post below from a prophecy group on Facebook. This essay is a sound, biblical response and accurately communicates my own assessment of this event. I encourage you to read and ponder the quoted Scriptures for yourself. Earnestly ask Jesus to give you discernment to recognize counterfeit religious movements. Cling to Jesus and His Word – only then can we protect ourselves and our families from dangerous spiritual deception.

Background - Quoting from an online article, “Asbury University Revival Comes to an End” <https://www.wkyt.com/2023/02/23/asbury-university-revival-comes-an-end/>, “The 16-day spontaneous spiritual revival on Asbury University’s campus is in its last day in-person. The non-stop praise and worship have been going on for almost 400 hours.” (Note: “Worship” as used in this post refers solely to music / singing.)

When I first began to see articles and videos of the Asbury movement, I was both skeptical and hopeful at the same time. So, I began to pray and seek the Lord about the spiritual reality behind what was happening. I did not want to be among those who can’t recognize the Spirit when He moves powerfully in front of my eyes (Mark 3:29). But I also believe that the Bible clearly teaches what the state of the church will be when He returns.

Nowhere in Scripture do we read of a great revival in the days leading up to the rapture. Instead, we’re warned that there will be a great “falling away,” a great apostasy (2 Thessalonians 2:3); and that the deception and delusion will be great enough “*so as to deceive, if possible, the elect*” (Matthew 24:24).

Deception is one of the greatest indicators of the end of days. This is what Jesus leads with in His answer to the disciples when asked how they would know His coming was near – “*See to it no one misleads you. For many will come in My name, saying, ‘I am the Christ, and will mislead many.’ ...Then if anyone says to you, ‘Behold, here is the Christ,’ or ‘There He is,’ do not believe him.*” (Matthew 24:4-5, 23). False Christs – false portrayals of the character and person of Christ will permeate the last days, along with many false prophets (Matthew 24:11). And it says “they” will mislead many.

I’m convinced the masses at Asbury are being led to worship a false Christ – a representation of a Jesus found nowhere in Scripture. If this were a true revival where sin was being confessed, God would have started by cleansing Asbury from its litany of heretical teaching over the years. Repentance would consist of the students and leaders coming to grips with the massive false teaching within this school. There would be deep anguish over the deception they’ve allowed to infiltrate their institution and their lives.

Here are just a few of the false theological distinctives of Asbury, as gleaned from their website, reports about the “revival,” various speakers they’ve had speak in their chapels and as espoused by the Dean of the Chapel Jessica LaGrone: (1) the need to break free from the “patriarchy;” (2) the ordination and promotion of female pastors; (3) the belief of sinless perfection prior to heaven; (4) Critical Race Theory (CRT) educational materials in their school; (5) the promotion of the social justice movement; (6) the teaching of ecumenicalism and the acceptance of Catholicism and other religions as valid; (7) praise and reverence for the pope (almost no other human at this time has done more for the coming one world religion than Pope Francis, demonically inspired in all he does and stands for, which is an entirely other discussion); (8) an acceptance of LGBTQ within the church (there have even been postings celebrating the fact that there have been gay students leading in this 24 hour “worship”); and (9) the embracing and promotion of the NAR (New Apostolic Reformation) – having already had plans to use their leaders (Mike Bickles being one) to help with the Collegiate Day of Prayer on February 23 livestreamed from Asbury. This was planned before this movement began and included leaders Rick Warren (embraces NAR, dominionism, and Replacement

Theology) and Francis Chan (ecumenical, declares Roman Catholic teachings to be similar to the gospel, has partnered with Benny Hinn on stage, has had Catholic priests wash his feet and pray over him, rejects belief alone for salvation).

Would God initiate a revival and worldwide movement from a place that teaches and supports practices and people so contrary to His heart? This is not a school bathed in holiness from which God had a clear space to work. It is a school saturated in and embracing deception and heresy.

Another warning flag for me is the emphasis on reconciliation and unity with others with very little mention made of the much-needed reconciliation with the Savior. God offers one road to salvation through His Son by the cross. There must be recognition of sin and our guaranteed future in hell without His direct intervention. So, when I listened to the message that launched this supposed revival and discovered that it had no reference to repentance and deliverance from hell but was a call to love better as we experience God's love, my hesitation grew. We do need to see God as a God of love, but that love was meant to be seen as fully demonstrated on the cross. To understand the love of God, we aren't to go to an emotionally driven place and "feel His love;" we are meant to understand our sinfulness and see the cross as the ultimate love of God for sinners.

I've heard multiple interviews on news stations from students at the "revival" and no mention is made of sin and the cross. What an amazing platform to share the Gospel but that isn't what is being shared. Are people being saved at Asbury? Quite possibly there are some genuine conversions taking place – but that doesn't seem to be the focus, salvation of the lost, which is what defines a revival as such. Asbury appears to be emphasizing a revival of reconciliation. And isn't that what we've been hearing about from groups like BLM over these past few years?

Satan loves reconciliation rooted in man if it misses Christ. He'll use anything at his disposal to distract from mankind finding Christ. Just because students are finding "healing" from emotional wounds and finding new places of belonging does not mean these students are finding Christ or that any are being saved. In a world of desperation, nothing is more heartbreaking than embracing hope based on a lie.

To me, it all perfectly depicts the description of the church of Laodicea given in Revelation – the blind (deceived), dead church. Some might argue that these kids aren't lukewarm though; they're on fire for the Lord. But if they're passionate about a false depiction of Christ then all this fire is misdirected and they are lukewarm and may even soon become hostile to the real Jesus, His followers, and His way to heaven being only through the cross.

Biblically, church history does not end with the global church on fire for the Lord; it ends with Laodicea. From all I've learned, the apostate church does not stand against the coming false kingdom, but helps usher it in. Only the remnant remains faithful, and historically, the remnant is always a small number amongst a greater majority. I do believe God is taking extra pains to accelerate the pressure and growth of the remnant, but this is separate from the state of the church at large.

Revelation tells us Laodicea is the church of the end, and this church is one He will vomit out (Revelation 3:16). So, knowing that, when I began to see what appeared on the screen to be pure worship and prayer being embraced by the masses, my hesitation continued to grow. The world is in such darkness that any true light is hated right now more than ever because Satan is slowly being given greater power over humanity until the church is taken, the restraint is lifted, and light is momentarily extinguished as the man of sin is revealed (2 Thessalonians 2:6). Jesus Himself promised this hatred. *"If the world hates you, keep in mind that it hated me first. If you belonged to the world, it would love you as its own. As it is, you do not belong to the world, but I have chosen you out of the world. That is why the world hates you"* (John 15:18-19). But even liberal media is writing stories on this great event and praising its offering of hope and unity. And aren't those the very things the antichrist will offer to a desperate hurting world – hope and unity resulting in satanic false peace?

The New Age [Movement] has been speaking for years of a great spiritual awakening that will spread throughout the world. The Asbury movement is only that which will further that awakening. It joins hands with the world, saying we can all coexist. I read multiple posts by participants saying it was beautiful being there and how it wasn't about one religion but rather just about God. Any discerning believer knows that God can be defined in a thousand ways, just as every religion does. But if we don't care to decipher who this god is that we're worshipping, then we can simply all just be carried away with worship and inadvertently join in with the worship of demons by those around us claiming to worship God.

There is a movement within Christianity that has been gaining ground with the exact theology in place to help usher in this one world religion – dominion theology. And their adherents are out in full force at Asbury. This is the belief by both those within the New Apostolic Reformation and some Calvinists who believe there is no rapture to be hoped for; rather God is waiting for the church to change the world for the better so that God will come back to a transformed world and be able to set up His kingdom. Israel has been replaced. The church is now and forever God's primary interest and heart. So there will be no final saving of Israel – they've been permanently replaced by the church. We can expect the world to fall more and more in line with kingdom thinking (which has become very warped). You can see why this is the perfect set up to embrace the antichrist who will offer "heaven on earth."

Satan is a master manipulator with supernatural intelligence, having had 6,000 years to study man. He has "perfected" the art of deceiving those made in the image of God. I believe Asbury was chosen very strategically. It is a perfect deception because it didn't happen at a known Pentecostal church; instead, it was a Christian university, which, unless people did their research, no one would know that Asbury was completely "woke" in ideology and theology. It seems conservative, traditional. And since what we mostly see is worship, we don't see, unless we keep looking, that there has also been speaking in tongues throughout with no translation and very little Bible teaching (this being praised by some as making it different than any other past revivals). It has primarily been testimonies, worship, and prayer. This is not a movement founded on the truth of the Bible and grief over sin, but is a movement founded on our world's desperate need to find hope, a world that is filled with darkness and hopelessness. Satan knows this, has created and fostered this environment, and is providing a substitute.

Someone can "feel God's love" and never be brought to the cross and be saved. Someone can feel bad about certain behaviors and know they're wrong without ever seeing themselves as a sinner in need of a Savior. Our young people and our world have been primed to desperately embrace anything that will answer their despair and provide hope. But hope can never be separated from the true Christ and His death on the cross, His resurrection, and His soon return. The gospel is our only hope.

How can a place filled with heresy and false theology suddenly accurately point those under their care to the true Christ when they've distorted all He teaches? Rather than being a perfect place for the Lord to move, it is a perfect place for deception to take hold because the enemy has already found fertile soil there. And again, if we know where we are at in human history, we know that the father of lies is crafting the greatest lie of all time, prepping the entire world to fall under his grand delusion.

Matthew 7:21-23. *"Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. On that day many will say to me, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and cast out demons in your name, and do many mighty works in your name?' And then will I declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from me, you workers of lawlessness.'"*

Matthew 7:15. *"Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing but inwardly are ravenous wolves."*

- Author: Unknown.