

South on Fire

Remember your Creator in the days of your youth Ecclesiastes 12:1

Revivals revolutionize youth for eternity, as their earnest quest for spiritual fulfillment is harnessed and made useful for God's kingdom. Throughout church history, youth have been at the forefront of revivals. Three facets of spiritual life prepare youth for revival; their spiritual position, perspective and purpose. Agents for change, today's youth, more than at any other time, are poised on the cutting edge to lead a global revival.



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1. Position

The position of youth makes them ideal agents for change; to try something new, be someone different or make something happen. Their availability, lack of earthly cares and responsibility, search for truth and need for acceptance motivate their actions. A relationship with Jesus Christ determines how youth expend their energy and view their future. Followers of Christ position themselves for God's purposes.

In 1970, an interdenominational move of the Holy Spirit broke out at Asbury College, in Wilmore, Kentucky, when the Lord walked into one of their routine chapel services. All heaven broke loose! A powerful baptism of God's love flowed down, as youth flooded to the altar to testify, confess and seek forgiveness for wrongs and recommit their lives to Christ. The revival quickly spread across the United States and touched the world.


What made Asbury conducive to such a mighty revival; the Wesleyan tradition, a history of spontaneous revivals? The key was the position of the youth. They were on their knees, fervently praying for it.

2. Perspective

When times are bad, we naturally tend to focus on the negative circumstances, but God's perspective is that when things are bad, it is His opportunity to bring forth good. In today's world, moral breakdown is hurting countless youth. Broken homes, child abuse, teenage pregnancy, abortion, drugs, terrorism ... the list goes on. In December 2006, LifeSite News reported that the lowered age of sexual consent to 14 makes Canada a favourite sex tourism destination and a haven for pedophiles². In the midst of such flagrant immorality, we desperately need God's perspective and divine intervention. Youth peering down the long road of life must develop spiritual vision and discernment to see God's perspective and cause change for good.

Revivals often occur in bad times and Asbury was no exception. In 1970, Asbury's students belonged to the baby boomer generation; raised on television, influenced by The Beatles, expressing their identity in their music; rebellious, irresponsible, atheistic and disrespectful of authority³. Hypocrisy and greed crept into the church, beginning a slide towards family breakdown, leaving youth without nurturing. Tension on the Asbury campus in the midst of these distressed times led the youth to fervently seek the Lord. While seeking God, our hearts undergo transition. No longer satisfied with the thrill of an experience with God, we completely surrender to Him to live holy lives. Observing lasting changed hearts and lives at Asbury, faculty, parents and history have concluded the revival was genuine.

We need to seek God's divine perspective in every situation. Eagles have highly developed, extremely keen eyesight⁴. To survive, eat, mate and live, they rely heavily on their vision⁵. God is compared to an eagle in the Torah. He continually indwells us by His Spirit, giving us spiritual vision and perspective.



Any youth in today's computer saturated world knows that visual acuity makes the difference. A new computer program called "Inferno" provides groundbreaking, high-resolution visual effects, supplying the best real-time performance. Inferno was used to bring to life the many creatures in *The Chronicles of Narnia: The Lion, The Witch, and The Wardrobe*. Inferno helped make the movie's spiritual message vivid and effective.

The Bible portrays a true glowing account of changed perspective—three Hebrew boys, advisors to King Nebuchadnezzar, were tightly bound and thrown into the king's blazing, fiery furnace, heated seven times hotter, for refusing to worship his massive golden image. The king's perspective profoundly changed, when to his astonishment they were unbound, unharmed and the Son of God even appeared with them in the fire! God brought good out of a very bad situation and gave this earthly kingdom His divine perspective.

3. Purpose

Our purpose comes from God's calling in our lives. What we do must come from who we are in Christ. His manifest presence in our lives compels us to share Him with others. "There was this sense of the divine presence that one doesn't have often in his life," confirmed Asbury's president. "And when you do have it, you never quite get over it You know. You know. You know it in your bone marrow." Asbury's youth experience God's presence and had His purpose. Wherever they traveled, revival followed.

God's word is written on our hearts and we can't keep it to ourselves. Jeremiah declared, *His word is in my heart like a fire, a fire shut up in my bones*. When we discover God's purpose, suddenly, His manifest presence becomes clearly visible and our lives are changed. A formerly meek Asbury student affirmed, "I changed ... I was different."

Positioned for positive change and seeing from God's perspective, youth are the first to spring to action, with a zeal some older folks wish they still had. However, spiritual exploits are not just for youth, but for all the young at heart. At age eighty-five, Caleb proclaimed, *I am still as strong today as the day Moses sent me out; I'm just as vigorous to go out to battle now as I was then*⁷. The Psalmist reminds us, Praise the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits ... *Who satisfies your desires with good things so that your youth is renewed like the eagle's*. Old eagles shed all their feathers through moulting and grow new ones, making them young again. In the same way, God continually revives us with new life. *We are restored as in the days of [our] youth*⁸.

In his book, *The Coming Great Awakening*, Dr. David L. McKenna, former president of Asbury Theological Seminary, prophesied, "A bigger outbreak, a global revival will begin soon. It probably will begin on campuses ... I see the signs wherever I go." Both youth and the young at heart can spearhead this next revival. Prayerfully positioning ourselves with godly perspective will bring forth Heaven's purposes in our lives. Praise Him!

Fourth of a five-part series based on Marianne Novoselac's new book *Praise: The Gateway to Miracles*.

Marianne Novoselac is the author of *Praise: The Gateway to Miracles*. To order your copy, please go to www.miraclepraise.com.



¹ http://forerunner.com/forerunner/X0585_Asbury_Revival_1970.html, June 9, 2007.

² <http://www.lifesite.net/ldn/2006/dec/06121905.html>, June 24, 2007.

³ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Generation_X, June 25, 2007.

⁴ <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Eagle>, June 12, 2007.

⁵ <http://birding.about.com/od/birdanatomy/a/birdsight.htm>, June 12, 2007.

⁶ <http://usa.autodesk.com/adsk/servlet/index?id=5562767&siteID=123112>, June 11, 2007.

⁷ Joshua 14:10-11.

⁸ Job 33:25.